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ADA MOORE'S STORY.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18 CATHERINE STREET,
STRAND.

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ADA MOORE'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

MR. FENWICK'S LECTURE.

VIOLET had not been so well as usual. Like all consumptive patients, she was very imprudent: and the slightest imprudence is very dangerous at Mentone. The heat there is sun-heat; and when the sun has set, or in the shade where his rays do not penetrate, it is often bitterly cold. In spite of Colonel Ridley's extreme care,—and he watched his lovely Violet as a tender mother might have done,—she had stayed out too late one day,

when a cold wind arose, and a violent cold had greatly increased her cough and all her distressing symptoms. She was, however, so much better on this evening that her father could not bear to refuse her when she entreated him to let her join our party; but we all saw a great change in her. There was a hectic flush on her cheek and an unnatural brilliancy in her eyes, a restlessness in her manner, and the transparency of alabaster in her skin. Poor Violet! she looked very lovely, but it was a beauty that made one's heart ache.

Colonel Ridley watched his darling daughter,—the last of so many lovely, loving, and beloved girls, his youngest, his last, his only hope,—and I think his experienced eye detected something that alarmed him, for I saw his cheek grow pale, and tears moisten his eyelids. He proposed to Violet to go home at once, saying she looked tired, and

ought not to be up late after her recent illness.

Violet was unwilling to go. She said she was very happy, and felt so well; but Colonel Ridley insisted, and as she was a sweet-tempered, duteous child, she followed her father, after having embraced us all tenderly.

"I fear that sweet girl is not long for this world," said my mother, as we heard the sound of the wheels of the carriage that bore her off die away in the distance.

"Whom the gods love die young," said Harry Blake mournfully, "and many deaths do they escape by this—the death of friends, and that which kills still more, the death of friendship. And since the common lot overtakes at last those who the longest escape the old archer's dart, perhaps the early grave over which men mourn may have been meant to save."

“Once,” said Alphonse de Monleon, “I wished to die young, but now the world seems so beautiful, and life so exquisite now, to die would seem too terrible. How I pray for long life! I feel too happy to die—I cannot die now.”

As he spoke, his beautiful dark eyes, radiant with pure love, hope, and joy unutterable, met the timid, tender glance of Beatrice's shy, violet orbs. Eloquently as a glance (a maiden's glance) could speak, those eyes said, ‘No! we cannot die now; we are too happy!’

Mr. Fenwick, having re-entered the room, took a seat by my mother, and resumed the rather boring old history of the principality:—

“I was speaking of the Port of Hercules,” said Mr. Fenwick, “when we were so unfortunately interrupted. I will only add that Augustus Cæsar embarked for Genoa from this very port, on his way to Rome,

after having conquered Caturbia. *Aggeribus socer Alpinis arce Monæci descendens,*" he added, in a loud, sonorous voice.

"I cannot, in my brief account of the history of the principality," said Mr. Fenwick, "enter minutely into all the combats that took place in the immediate neighbourhood of the Port of Hercules."

"I am very thankful for that," I whispered to Beatrice, who smiled in sympathy.

"Otho and Vitellius fought many battles here," he added, "and Fabius Valens, one of Vitellius's generals, landed his troops with the view of protecting Marcus Maturius against a Gallic revolt. The Emperor Maximin availed himself of this port on his return from his attack upon the Bogandes. The Saracens, in 814, took possession of the heights of Esu, Turbia, and St. Agnese. They had long been in the habit of pillaging and destroying the Ligurian village, which

was composed of buildings scattered along the shore near the Port of Hercules ; which, during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, was in their hands. At length a Christian champion came to rescue the inhabitants of Liguria from the hands of the infidels. The champion was the great Gíballino Grimaldi, a noble knight of Genoa. He conquered the Saracens, and the country became his. From the grateful inhabitants he received all the lands that form this beautiful coast, as a reward for his sublime constancy and surpassing valour. It was thus that the Genoese rule began in Monaco. It was thus that the first Grimaldi became the ruler of this people. Then it came to pass that the Emperor Frederick the First granted all the land of the Ligurian Riviera, from Monaco to Porto Venere, in fief to the Genoese, and that Count Raymond of Provence recognised that grant. This grant was re-

newed by the Emperor Henry IV., who stipulated that the Genoese should build a castle at Monaco for the defence of the Christians against the Saracens. From the year 1270 to 1340 Monaco was the refuge of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines alternately. The Guelphs were represented by the Grimaldis; the Ghibellines by the Spinolas. By a *ruse*, Charles Grimaldi, however, entered Monaco disguised as a monk, on Christmas Eve, 1306, while the solemn midnight mass was being celebrated,—one of the most solemn celebrations in all the year. I grieve to add, for I much respect the Grimaldis,” said Mr. Fenwick, “that the supposed monk cut the throats of the sentinels, and then admitted his accomplices. From this time the Grimaldis remained sole possessors of the place, except during the eleven years between 1827 and 1838. I will now briefly sketch the line of Princes of

Monaco from the time of Charles Grimaldi, called Charles I., first Prince of Monaco, besieged by Genoa, retired to Nice, returned triumphantly, 1346. Regnier succeeded in 1363. He was a brave prince. His name is dear to the Popes, for he seized the anti-papal cardinals as they passed through Mentone on their way to Avignon. 1407, Ambroise succeeded. 1424, Jean I. became reigning prince. He was a naval hero; he married, after a victory in which 3,000 men were killed, the daughter of Roge Tommaso Fre-gosa. Afraid of the jealousy of the Genoese, who had become inimical to the Grimaldis, he offered the suzerainty of Roccabruna and the half of Mentone to Louis, Duke of Savoy. Thus began the power of the Dukes of Savoy in Monaco. From this time forwards the Grimaldis did homage to the Dukes of Savoy—bareheaded, without boots or spurs, and received a sword and a kiss on

the mouth as a sign that they were again invested with their lands as fiefs of Savoy. So late as 1849 this homage of the Grimaldis to the Dukes of Savoy was made by Mentone and Roccabruna an excuse for deserting the Princes of Monaco and vowing allegiance to the King of Sardinia, also Duke of Savoy, as their true sovereign. In 1454 Catalan reigned for three years. In 1457 Lambert succeeded him, and added Ventimiglia to the principality. In 1493 Jèan II. was made Lieutenant of the Riviera by Charles VIII. of France. He was murdered by his wicked brother Lucia in 1505. Lucia then reigned. In 1515 this prince bought from Anne de Lascaris the feudal rights her family retained over Mentone. Lucia was murdered in the palace of Monaco by his nephew, Bartholomew Doria, of Dolceaqua. 1523, Honorius, a minor, became Prince of Monaco, under the guardianship of his *ainé*, Augustine Gri-

maldi, Bishop of Grasse. Honorius was one of the bravest and best of princes ; he was the Alfred of the Riviera. 1581, Charles II. came to the throne, abetted by Spain. He refused to do homage to the Dukes of Savoy for Mentone and Roccabruna, and after a long and solemn trial he was dispossessed of both in 1588.

“1589, Hercules, his successor, adopting a similar mistaken policy, depended on the protection of Spain, and refused homage to Savoy. Spain thus acquired a dominion over the Grimaldis. The Spaniards became powerful in Monaco, and the remains of their language can still be traced in remote parts of the principality. Hercules, having grossly offended the people of Monaco, was thrown into the sea and drowned in 1604.

“1604, Honorius II. shook off the Spanish yoke. He placed Monaco under the protection of France, by treaty with Richelieu,

at Peronne. He reigned fifty-eight years, a wise, brave prince, beloved and revered.

“1662, Louis I., grandson of Honorius, succeeded—wicked and cruel. He was ambassador from France to Rome, and became so extravagant that, to supply his ruinous expenses, he meanly compelled his subjects to resign their rights over their oil-mills, etc., to him. This cruel injustice and usurpation has continued until a very late period.

“1701, Antoine became Prince of Monaco, and in 1714 having referred the case to the Courts of France and England, who decided against him, had to renew the homage due from the Grimaldis to the Dukes of Savoy. He had no son, but he gave his daughter Louise Hippolyte Grimaldi to Jacques de Tarigny, Count de Matignon, who consented to take the name of Grimaldi on being appointed successor to Antoine: women had hitherto been excluded from the succession.

“1731. When the Count de Matignon expected to succeed to his father-in-law, the people refused to recognize him as their sovereign, and vowed allegiance to Louise Hippolyte Grimaldi, his wife. The Princess Louise did homage to Charles Emmanuel III., King of Sardinia and Duke of Savoy, for the fiefs of Mentone and Roccabruna. She died within a year of her accession, and with her ended the ancient house of the Monaco Grimaldis.

“1734, Honorius III., son of Louise Hippolyte Grimaldi and the Count de Matignon, did homage to King Victor III., Duke of Savoy. Honorius III. married the beautiful Catarina de Brignole, niece of the Doge of Genoa, and had by her two sons. Honorius IV. and Joseph Honorius IV. married Louise d'Aumont, Duchesse de Mazarin. In his time broke out that grand moral earthquake, which for centuries had been silently and

secretly preparing, and in which the feudal system was for ever crushed; that grand outbreak by which the oppression, the cruelty, and insolence of centuries was avenged; and the people, on whose neck aristocracy had trodden for ages, planted its broad foot not merely on the neck of aristocracy, but, alas, of monarchy itself,—I mean the first great French revolution.

“In 1790 a deputation was sent to Honorius IV., representing the wrongs of the people. They demanded a municipality and popular suffrage. Honorius refused, but the spirit of the times inflamed the blood of his people, and he was obliged to comply; after which he retired to France.

“A year later, a French army crossed the Var, took possession of Nice, abolished the feudal system at Monaco, and thus deprived the prince of his sovereignty. He died in Paris, A.D. 1795.

“The ex-principality of Monaco was now comprised in the Department of the Maritime Alps; but ultimately, by the crafty intervention of Talleyrand, it was replaced in the relations in which it existed before the 1st of January, 1792.

“The house of Matignon-Grimaldi thus recovered the sovereignty which it had lost for twenty years; and though the Marquis di Cagnes and the Seigneur della Pietra, descendants of male Grimaldis not in the direct line, disputed those rights that Honorius IV. claimed as the son of Louise Hippolyte—excluded, as they assert, on account of her sex—they have never succeeded in establishing their claims to the Principality of Monaco; and the descendants of the Princess Louise Hippolyte, daughter of Antoine Grimaldi the Good and the Well-Beloved, and wife of the Count Matignon, still enjoy the sovereignty of Monaco.

“Such, my dear ladies, is the old history of the place in which you all take so deep an interest. I have taken you back to Anno Domini 286, and I have brought the history of the Principality down to the days of the first Emperor Napoleon and his prime minister Talleyrand. The subsequent history of Monaco and the other towns of the Riviera abounds in interest; and the reign of Honorius V., *alias* the Bad, of Florestan Roger Louis di Grimaldi, his brother, who, in 1816, married Marie Louise Gilbert de Metz, a domineering woman, who made a nonentity of her husband.

“The tyranny of this petticoat government, and the joy with which the oppressed people, when the Italian crisis came in 1847, turned to Charles Albert, King of Sardinia and Duke of Savoy; the enthusiasm of all the towns of the Riviera for Charles Albert and Pio Nono,—all proved how intense the sense

of wrong and misgovernment,—all tend to convince the thinking that retributive justice is in store for all.

“The annexation of all that interesting country, these *Revers de Montagnes* as Napoleon called them, has been much discussed.

“It must have been a great pang to a King of Sardinia and Duke of Savoy to give up the cradle of his race. Certainly the votes of his people were in favour of the annexation. They were deceived by interested representations of a great improvement in their trade in lemons, and the diminution of the tax on polenta, their chief article of food. In these, however, they were grievously disappointed. The lemon trade has gained nothing. Polenta is one sous the litre dearer here than in Italy. And, worst of all, the Mentonese are now, as French subjects, liable to the conscription.

“After nine years of the parental govern-

ment of Sardinia, they were gulls and fools to vote for a change—and they say so now themselves.

“I have now finished this long lecture,” said Mr. Fenwick. “Harry and I have worked hard to get the materials together. We have had recourse to the celebrated Colonel Trima’s MSS. at Turin, to Dr. Bottini’s clever work, and to a very clever, spirited little volume by Augustus Hare.”

We all applauded as loudly as our great fatigue allowed, and the party then broke up.

I don’t know how the lovers, Alphonse and Beatrice, would have sat out this long lecture but that they were seated side by side; and to those who truly love, the mere presence of the loved one makes any place a Paradise.

Frequently, however, Alphonse de Mon-

leon was about to interrupt Fenwick of Fenwick, to dispute some erroneous opinion arrogantly expressed; but Beatrice's eloquent eyes implored her lover not to interrupt the lecturer, and thus prolong the lecture; and he yielded to the mute eloquence of her glance.

CHAPTER II.

AN EVENING AT HOME.

THE next day was a day of incessant rain. In the evening Harry asked me to sing some of the dear old Scotch and Irish melodies, which, in his boyhood, he used to listen to, unseen and unnoticed, outside our sitting-room windows, when I sang them to my dear father.

“Auld Robin Gray,” “Donald,” “Robin Adair,” “The Harp that once through Tara’s Halls,” “Isle of Beauty,” and “Deck not with Gems,”—these were Harry Blake’s

favourites ; and he, as he said—

“ Ever in their melodious stores
Finding a charm unheard before,”

could not weary of hearing them.

While Mr. Fenwick talked to my dear mother, his purblind eyes were ever and anon glancing angrily at Harry and myself at the piano, and at Lady Beatrice and Alphonse in the window recess.

The earnest conversation of those happy lovers was carried on, as such conversations generally are, in a very low voice. Doubtless what they said would have seemed very folly to other ears ; doubtless their whispered talk was made up of the sweet tautology of love, and was eloquent only to their own hearts.

I have no doubt that the happiness of a life—

“ The very quintessence of that all
That paradise has left us since the fall”—

was crowded for Alphonse and Beatrice into that day of reunion.

But all that's bright must fade.

The clock struck ten.

Ten is a late hour for Mentone, where there is no visiting—as far as dinner-parties, balls, and *soirées* are concerned—among the English.

Every family has its invalid—that precious, fragile creature ; that delicate hot-house plant ; that ephemeral, uncertain blessing, dearer to the hearts of parents, brothers, and sisters than the healthy and the blooming can ever be,—and therefore, at Mentone, early hours are universal ; and at ten o'clock my mother, graciously thanking Mr. Fenwick for his valuable discourse—a courtesy which did not prevent his looking very sullen and offended—reminded Lady Beatrice of Dr. B——'s express orders that she was never to sit up *after* ten o'clock, and

that he should greatly prefer her retiring at nine.

As Alphonse took his leave, he requested my mother to grant him an interview as early as she conveniently could on the following morning.

My mother agreed, and as she did so, noting the hope and joy in his fine Italian face, a tear rose to her eye, and a sigh heaved her kind, sympathizing bosom ; for she knew the world and those of the world too well, not to feel certain that Lady Beatrice's proud father would at once put a stop to all intercourse between the lovers.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEATH OF VIOLET.

February 10th.—Two exciting events occurred to-day,—one of a most harrowing and painful nature, the other likely to bring much trouble and many heart-aches in its train.

Dr. B——, calling as usual to see Lady Beatrice before she was up and dressed, remained a very short time with his patient; but before he left the house he came into the breakfast-room to see my mother and myself, and to tell us that Violet Ridley had died at eight o'clock that morning!

Violet dead !

That beautiful young girl who had left us apparently so happy, so joyous, and so buoyant but a few hours before !

It was a very great shock.

My mother and I burst into tears, and exclaimed simultaneously—

“ Her father !—her poor father !”

“ Ah, you may well say her poor father !” said Dr. B——. “ He is indeed to be pitied. As to the sweet girl herself, she died without pain, without a struggle. As I live in the same house with the Ridleys, I generally looked in upon Miss Ridley before going down to breakfast. I have seen so much of consumption that I am always prepared for what to others seems so sudden. Directly I entered the sweet child's room I perceived a change. The hectic flush, that rose of the tomb, was burning in her cheek ; it has been very bright there lately. Her maid

told me she had been restless in the night, had talked in her sleep, principally about those dear ones ‘gone before,’ her mother, and her sisters.

“‘I think, Sir, she was a little light-headed,’ said Brisbane, the maid; ‘at any rate, she’s not been like herself.’

“‘Call the Colonel,’ I said in a whisper. ‘He ought to be here.’

“‘The Colonel was on his way to his daughter’s room when Brisbane met him.

“‘Dr. B——!’ cried Miss Ridley, ‘come here! I want to thank you for all your care, all your kindness. Papa!—oh, dear, blessed Papa!—what will you do without me? But I must go. I cannot stay. I am called hence. I have seen Mamma and all my sisters to-night,—angels with palm branches, and starry crowns, and white robes,—and they all said, “Violet, come!—come to Jesus!—come to peace!—come to

glory !” Good-bye, darling father !” she said, rising herself as he extended his arms to fold her to his heart : but the next moment she sank back.

“ Violet Ridley was gone. The spirit had fled ; nought but the beautiful casket remained.

“ The gem was with those jewels of which the triune Jehovah will one day make up his crown !”

“ And her father,” sobbed my mother—
“ her poor father—how does he bear this dreadful loss ?”

“ At present,” said Dr. B——, “ he is in that first stage we have all known,—at least all who have lost a beloved one ; and who have not ? He is half stunned, half excited, quite bewildered, but does not as yet realize the event that makes of his life a mournful blank, a long despair. But I must return to him, dear ladies,” said Dr. B——, rising,

“for I do not know how soon this stage of grief may give way to one much more dreadful. Farewell !”

Dr. B—— was scarcely gone, when Alphonse de Monleon, nearly half an hour before his time, arrived. Your true love’s watch always gains. Love is a selfish feeling with the best of us. Alphonse was a very kind-hearted, sympathizing, good young man ; but he was in love—madly, wildly, passionately in love ; and Violet’s death did not affect him much, for his whole soul was absorbed by the thought of Lady Beatrice, and the rapture of being loved by her.

My mother, to whom the thought of death brought back the dark tragedy of my blessed father’s fate, was not at all disposed to talk of love and marriage with Alphonse de Monleon at such a time ; but he would not be denied.

He came to seek for Lord Mountjoy’s

address. He wished at once to ask Milor's permission to pay his addresses to Lady Beatrice. My mother gave him the address, but said—

“Dear M. de Monleon, Lord Mountjoy is a very proud and wealthy peer. He has no son; but as the title and estates go to heirs general, Lady Beatrice (if she is spared) will one day be a Countess in her own right, with thirty or forty thousand a year at least. *You* are of ancient birth, and have every amiable and estimable quality; but forgive me when I say I think Lord Mountjoy will refuse to give his daughter to any but an English nobleman.”

“But if I have won her love,” said Alphonse, “Lord Mountjoy cannot give to another the woman who loves me, and who bids me hope,—who swears she will never wed another. Why should Lord Mountjoy object to me? He cannot be of more illus-

trious descent, more ancient birth, than the de Monleons; and if he *is* so wealthy, he has the less occasion to look for wealth in his son-in-law. Not that I want his riches: all I want is his beautiful, his angelic daughter. She is content to live at Mentone with me, in the home in which my family have lived for centuries. I have enough to maintain her as the ladies of my family have ever been maintained, and as among the first and foremost of the noble matrons of Mentone. Oh! I will not believe that the father of such an angel as my Beatrice can be a sordid, unfeeling monster. His daughter loves me, is happy in that love, and improves daily in health, because there is no restorative like happiness, no doctor like love!”

“Well, Monsieur de Monleon,” said my mother, “here is Lord Mountjoy’s direction; you must obtain his consent to your addressing his daughter before I can allow this

intimacy to continue any longer. As I have the charge of Lady Beatrice, had I entertained the slightest suspicion of this attachment on her side, I should—forgive me—have discountenanced all intimacy until you had ascertained her father's wishes and views. You must now excuse me: the news of Miss Ridley's death has re-opened all the wounds in my heart, and unfitted me for society."

"Can I not see Beatrice?" asked Alphonse eagerly.

"Not till you have written to her father, and obtained his answer," said my mother. "Don't blame me, dear M. de Monleon," she said; "from my heart I wish you joy, but my experience makes me fear you will never obtain Lord Mountjoy's consent;—indeed, I am afraid he will at once send for his daughter back, or perhaps come in search of her himself."

Alphonse turned pale and red alternately

at these words. His eyes flashed ; all the old blood of the Monleons boiled in his veins ; but he said nothing more. Finally he bowed to my mother and me, took Lord Mountjoy's address from her hand, and hurried out of the house.

CHAPTER IV.

EXPLORING MENTONE.

February 12th.—The sudden death of Violet Ridley throws a gloom over our little circle. The banishment of Alphonse de Monleon from our house until Lord Mountjoy's answer has arrived greatly affected Lady Beatrice's health and spirits.

My mother felt the deepest sympathy with Colonel Ridley, but she knew, by her own sad experience, that visits and letters of "condolence," which are a comfort to those whose sorrow is not of the deepest and most

heartrending kind, are only a mockery when the bereaved has lost all that was nearest and dearest on earth. She therefore only begged Dr. B—— to express to Colonel Ridley her intense sympathy, and to offer any services in her power. Colonel Ridley returned a grateful message, but we never saw him again. He left Mentone at night, with his beloved Violet's remains, which he was resolved not to leave on a foreign land.

Harry Blake, my mother, Mr. Fenwick, and I continue our donkey-rides and excursions in the lovely neighbourhood of Mentone, but no one, save Mr. Fenwick, enjoys these excursions as they had done.

February 13th.—Death being now so constantly in our thoughts, we all felt disposed to pay a visit to the cemetery. It is situated at the very top of the cone-like town, and

has an imposing appearance in the distance. The monuments, from a distance, give it the air of a castellated dwelling or fortress.

Like all Roman Catholic burial-places, there is something trumpery and untidy about the cemetery at Mentone. The wreaths of yellow *immortelles*,—damp, discoloured, and decaying,—and the tinsel, toy-like offerings on many of the humble graves, offend the eye of taste.

The true sublime of simplicity is wanting in all those foreign burial-grounds. Marble monuments, chaste and solid, for the wealthy, simple head-stones or stone crosses for those who are unable to afford more expensive memorials,—these, interspersed with yew-trees, cypresses, and cedars, in my opinion form a perfect burial-place.

I have nowhere seen so exquisite a church-yard as that at Bournemouth, in Hampshire, and it has the now rare advantage of being

a *churchyard*, not a cemetery alone,—“*God’s acre*,” as the Germans call it.

Who do not wish to rest, and to lay their darlings down to sleep (when they must part with them) where the shadow of our dear mother Church shall extend to their narrow beds, and where the church bells shall hallow the air, albeit the ears that so loved them once can hear them no more?

* * * * *

The wealthy among the Mentonese can buy *à perpétuité* the graves where their dear ones are buried, and raise thereon what monuments they please. The poor lie in the middle of the cemetery, and mounds, on which are placed small white crosses, mark the spot where it pains one to think they are not allowed to await undisturbed the Archangel’s trump and the Judgment Day.

A portion of ground is set aside within the cemetery walls for the Protestants. As

yet there are comparatively few interred here. Not but what many die at Mentone ; wherever consumptive patients are sent, a large percentage *must* die ; but all who can afford it, and few who are not wealthy are able to travel so far, bear the dear remains away to the family vault—the native soil.

* * * * *

When we had reached the end of the Rue Longue, Mr. Fenwick, after a whispered conference with Harry Blake, informed us that from a terraced garden to our right Pope Pius VII., on his return to Rome after long years of exile, blessed the very people who, although at one time all eagerness to pull down all ecclesiastical powers, now penitent and humbled, flocked to welcome him, kneeling and sobbing as he blessed them.

“Harry,” said Mr. Fenwick, “your eyes

are better than mine. Find out and read aloud to the ladies the inscription on the wall recording this event."

Harry Blake read aloud—

PIO VII. P. M.
LUTETIA ROMAM REDIIIT
HINC
COELESTEM POPULO SUPPLICI
BENEDICTIONEM IMPERTIBAT
DIE XI MENSIS FEBRUARII
AN. DOM. MDCCCXIII.

Mr. Fenwick, having translated the Latin for the benefit of my mother and myself, then exclaimed—

"Opposite, on the *Maison Brea*, is an inscription in honour of General Brea. I was here," added Mr. Fenwick, "when it was placed on that wall; and I well remember the enthusiasm of that brave man's fellow-townsmen on the occasion."

“What a pity,” said my mother, “that the custom of thus honouring the illustrious departed in their native towns is not adopted in England! What interest these inscriptions give to a walk through the streets in Italian cities! If the names of great men were thus honoured and engraved on London houses, the dull streets would be relieved of half their monotony.”

“Read us this inscription, Harry,” said Mr. Fenwick. And Harry, who, thanks to the old Count, was an excellent French scholar, read—

AU GÉNÉRAL BREA

NÉ A MENTON LE 23 AVRIL

1720. MORT A PARIS LE 24

JUIN 1848 POUR LA DÉFENSE

DE L'ORDRE ET DE LA PATRIE.

PAR DÉCRET DU GRAND CONSEIL

DES VILLES LIBRES DE MENTON

ET ROQUEBRUNE DU 25

SEPTEMBRE 1848.

“And now,” said Mr. Fenwick, “let us visit the Mairie. There, ladies, you will see a stone of the accursed Bastille. At the time of the righteous destruction of that stronghold of tyranny, a stone of the prison was sent to every *commune* in France. I fear they have not been everywhere preserved, but I saw that which was sent to Mentone, when I was last here; and the excitement caused by the images it conjured up quite overpowered me. I am older and less excitable now; but you, ladies, with your lively imaginations, warm hearts, and ready sympathies, how will you bear to look at a stone of the actual Bastille?”

We did bear it very well, and felt only pleasurable and triumphant emotions. When Mr. Fenwick, who in politics was a liberal, gave us a really eloquent description of the destruction of the Bastille, his purblind

eyes flashed, his cheeks flushed, his action was violent but not inappropriate or ungraceful; and, on the whole, I never saw Mr. Fenwick to such advantage.

From the Mairie we repaired to the public Library. It was bequeathed to the town by Madame Villarney, and a poorer collection of books, or a more bare, cold, and comfortless place I never visited.

“The Mentonese authorities,” said Mr. Fenwick, “should pay a visit to our British Museum. What order, warmth, comfort, and convenience are now combined in the arrangements there, while here there are no books but exploded medical works, and not a chair or a table to be seen!”

As my mother had some purchases to make, we left the comfortless Library, and repaired to “Amaranthe’s Bazaar,” in the Rue St. Michel—which, by the bye, is the chief street, the High-street or Grande Rue

of Mentone. The articles I most coveted were of the curious and beautiful woodwork carved by the natives ; but they are frightfully dear ; everything else—and you can get almost everything at “Amaranthe’s Bazaar”—is extremely reasonable.

Opposite the bazaar is the “Maison Frenca ;” and Harry Blake, at Mr. Fenwick’s request, read us an inscription on a white marble slab, in honour of “Le Chevalier Frenca,” the most eminent modern citizen of Mentone.

“We must not take you home, ladies,” said Mr. Fenwick, “without showing you at the back of the bazaar an almost ruined palazzo, called the ‘Maison d’Adhémar,’ for in this palazzo the brother of the demon Robespierre lived as representative of the French people during the first Revolution. The great Napoleon,” he added, raising his hat (for he admired the great Napoleon to

enthusiasm), "has often crossed this threshold, and with his quick, firm step has trod this now grass-grown pavement. Napoleon the First passed frequently through Mentone when he was only General Bonaparte. *Only*, did I say? Never was he so truly great as at that time. The house now known as the Pharmacie de M. Grasse is that in which the conqueror lived, or rather lodged, on the ground-floor."

"Surely," said my mother, "loving house inscriptions as the Mentonese do, this ought to be emblazoned with the Emperor's name!"

"I am astonished it is not," said Mr. Fenwick, "and I shall take an early opportunity of suggesting the insertion of a marble tablet commemorating the facts connected with it, to the Mayor."

We stopped opposite the Hôtel de Turin to look at the bust of the Emperor Napoleon the Third. It was placed there, close to a

fountain, at the time of the Annexation. As a work of art it is not to be admired, but the likeness is a very strong one.

We then repaired to Mr. Willoughby's shop, for my mother had many things to order; and whatever you want in Mentone—houses, servants, linen, plate, grocery, etc. etc.,—Mr. Willoughby is the person to apply to.

He procures you apartments; he appears on your first arrival with the inventory; he sees you are not imposed upon. He seems to be gifted with ubiquity, for he is here, there, and everywhere, the spirit of comfort, order, and civility. I only wish every Continental town had its "Mr. Willoughby." Life would be more smooth and pleasant than it is to English travellers abroad.

As we left the Rue St. Michel we met M. de Monleon. He looked pale and haggard, and as if he had not slept. He had a

large branch of beautiful white jasmine, the starry flowers of unusual size and ambrosial odour, in his hand.

He asked me to present it to Lady Beatrice for him.

I could not refuse to do so, he looked so anxious and so unhappy ; but my dear mother, when he had quitted us, told me to avoid, as much as possible, till we had heard from Lord Mountjoy, being in any way instrumental as an interpreter between Lady Beatrice and M. de Monleon.

“Oh,” she cried, nervously, “if I had had the slightest suspicion that Beatrice could have fallen in love with him, I would *never* have allowed them to meet. I fancy I know Lord Mountjoy well (not personally, but as a type of a class), and I am certain he would rather see Lady Beatrice in her coffin than consent to her wedding Alphonse de Monleon.”

“And yet, Mamma,” I said, “Lord Mountjoy is not of a very ancient family. I was looking him out in Debrett yesterday. I see his grandfather, who seems to have been the first *gentleman* of the race, was a clergyman, who took high honours at Oxford, and became a Dean. His father was a very successful barrister, ennobled in the reign of George IV. Beatrice’s father is only the second Earl of the name ; and the De Monleons go back centuries, and every antecedent century finds them greater, nobler, and more powerful. How can Lord Lord Mountjoy, then, object to Alponse de Monleon as beneath Lady Beatrice in rank ? And as to fortune, she will have enough for both !”

“Ada !” said Mr. Fenwick, “I must say to you, as Polonius did to Ophelia, ‘You speak like a green girl unsifted in such matters.’ The more people have, the more

they expect ; and though we Englishmen are so proud of tracing our somewhat apocryphal descent from a Norman, a Spanish, or an Italian stock, we have no respect for the direct and unquestionable representatives of those noble families whose names we adopt whenever can we find any excuse for so doing ; but John Bull is a mass of inconsistencies, and this is not one of the least of them."

"I hope," said my mother, "Lord Mountjoy will not keep his daughter long in suspense. I am certain it is a very strong, deep, and lasting attachment, that has so unfortunately sprung up between Alphonse de Monleon and herself ; and, with her delicate and peculiar organization, disappointed love would soon prove fatal. Come what will of it, and whatever Lord Mountjoy's anger may be, I shall think it my duty to tell him so."

“He will not heed what you say, my dear friend,” cried Mr. Fenwick. “He is a stiff-necked, obstinate old Tory ” (Mr. Fenwick was a Whig—almost a Radical), “and Tories are not only as blind as buzzards, but as obstinate as pigs.”

We had reached our house by this time, and Mr. Fenwick took his leave, proposing to call in the evening to give us a history of the Grimaldi family and of their former influence.

CHAPTER V.

THE LOVERS' SUSPENSE.

February 16th. — Nearly a fortnight has now elapsed since Lady Beatrice wrote a touching and dutiful letter to her father, confessing her love for Alphonse de Monleon, and imploring him to consent to an engagement between them. By the same post Alphonse had begged the proud Earl's permission to address Lady Beatrice. He had written a manly, straightforward letter ; and while his words breathed the most devoted love for Lady Beatrice, he kept up his own dignity throughout.

This is a time of great suspense and suffering for the lovers; and it begins to tell on Lady Beatrice's very delicate constitution and appearance.

Three weeks have elapsed without any reply from the Earl, either to his daughter or Alphonse de Monleon. They both are becoming very impatient and uneasy. It is true the Earl is a very bad correspondent, and has only written once to his daughter since she has been with us. In that letter he spoke of a new yacht he had purchased, and of a cruise he intended to make; and hinted that some day, when she least expected it, she might see him at Mentone. From her father's long silence Lady Beatrice can only suppose that he is still cruising; and as it might be, if so, a long time before he returns, she has begged my mother not any longer to exclude Alphonse de Monleon from our society, but to let him be

received as he was before the unfortunate accident which led to the betrayal of their mutual sentiments. She promises, both in his name and her own, that no word of love shall pass between them until she has heard from her father what are his commands on the subject.

My mother, who was much distressed to see the havoc suspense is making in Lady Beatrice's newly-acquired health and strength, consented to this reasonable request, and invited M. de Monleon, to explain to him on what terms he would again be admitted to Lady Beatrice's presence. Since his banishment he has been ill and unhappy, and his own pleasure and solace had been in rambling about the country gathering flowers for Lady Beatrice, which he sent her morning and evening, by a maid-servant of his own—a sister of Lucia. He was much delighted when he received my mother's note,

for, as he said, in true lover's language, "It was Eden where Beatrice was, and the wilderness where she was not."

To be in her presence again, he agreed to all she had promised in his name; and my mother, taking pity on him,—for he really looked very ill,—invited him to remain to spend the evening with us.

It was almost our usual tea-time when he came, and I hurried up to Beatrice to tell her the good news, and to accompany her downstairs.

Beautiful Beatrice! She was sitting before her glass, with her long rippled golden hair unbound, and her form in a white wrapper. A pile of flowers, which Alphonse had sent her, were in her lap; they were chiefly lemon blossoms and cappuchini (a kind of white wild arum), but in her hand she held a large branch of white jasmine, and I thought she looked like a virgin saint

and martyr, with a palm branch in her white hand. She blushed and smiled with joy ineffable, when I told her Alphonse was below, and that my mother had asked him to tea.

Very hastily she bound up her hair, dressed herself, and was about to leave her room, when a carriage drove up to the door.

“If it should be Papa!” she gasped, trembling and catching my arm. “Oh, Ada! it is too dark to see who it is; but, for pity’s sake, run down to the first landing and listen, and tell me what name is announced, and if you can see what sort of person it is, and if he looks very stern and angry!”

Seeing her so agitated, I obeyed.

A bald, gentlemanly man, in black, sprang from the carriage, and handed out a fashionable, haughty-looking woman, about fifty.

“Lady Junia Stamford and Mr. Drum-

mond," said the gentleman to Proudfoot, who came forward to receive them. "We wish to speak to Mrs. Moore before we see Lady Beatrice."

I ran up to Lady Beatrice, who was standing outside her own door, trembling violently, as she waited for my report.

"Lady Junia Stamford and Mr. Drummond!" she said. How strange! Lady Junia is my eldest aunt; Mr. Drummond is Papa's solicitor. Oh, Ada!" she cried, bursting into tears, as she threw herself into my arms, "I hope Papa has not sent them to fetch me away. If he has, it will be my death! Yes, if they bring me a letter from Papa, commanding my return, he has signed my death warrant!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE COUNTESS OF MOUNTJOY.

February 12th.—Lady Junia Stamford and Mr. Drummond remained for some time closeted with my mother in the dining-room.

Beatrice and I had descended to the drawing-room, where Alphonse de Monleon, lividly pale and trembling, was pacing up and down in lover-like impatience.

At length my mother entered the room. She went up to Lady Beatrice, and embracing her tenderly, said—

“My dear child, I have some very bad news to tell you: are you strong enough to bear it? Your aunt, Lady Junia Stamford, and your father’s solicitor, Mr. Drummond, are come over.”

“To take me away?” cried Beatrice in a voice of agony. “To tell me Papa refuses his consent—to make *us* wretched for life? Oh that I were dead!”

“No, dearest, no! Your aunt and Mr. Drummond know nothing of the contents of your letter and M. de Monleon’s to your father. They are come to comfort you, to receive your instructions, and to learn your wishes. Beatrice, you are, alas, your own mistress now. Your dear father is no more. You are now, poor child, the Countess of Mountjoy.”

“And an orphan!” shrieked Beatrice, falling, almost senseless, into the arms which Alphonse extended to receive her.

* * * * *

Beatrice did not actually faint away, and a flood of tears came to her relief.

She had seen but little of her father, and though the shock was very great at first, the sorrow was not like that of a daughter who had been reared, as I had been, in the almost constant presence of my dear loving father.

Besides, she was in love—passionately in love—for the first time ; and when Alphonse de Monleon, feeling that he ought not to remain at such a time, and rather dreading the cold eyes of Lady Junia and the family lawyer, rose to go, she clung to him, and said, “No one now can part us, Alphonse ! I am, alas ! my own mistress ; and when my period of mourning has expired——”

She could say no more ; her tears gushed forth ; and Alphonse, after one passionate embrace, hurried away.

Lady Junia had a very sallow complexion,

and the deep mourning she wore made it appear still more cadaverous. Her light hair was streaked with silver; she had no perceptible eyebrows,—cold, light eyes,—and a very thin, hooked nose; her lips, too, were very thin, and her upper teeth projected a little. She had the manner of a woman of high birth and breeding, but there was nothing winning or engaging about her.

She evidently hoped and wished Lady Beatrice, or rather the young Countess of Mountjoy, to leave us at once, and to go with her to Palermo, where her eldest son, who was very delicate, had been ordered to winter, and where he was expecting her to join him.

Lady Junia Stamford, I fancied, was poor—at least, poor for a woman of her rank and position; and the guardianship, or rather *chaperonage*, of Lady Beatrice would have suited her exactly.

But the young Countess was firm as a rock.

Her father, she said, had placed her with her dear, kind friend, her second mother, Mrs. Moore, who had come to Mentone on her account; and nothing would induce her to quit the place and us while we remained there.

Mr. Drummond tried his powers of argument and persuasion, but with no better success. He had already told the young Countess that her father, while cruising near Algiers, had caught a fever of the typhus kind, and had died in twenty-four hours; that, as Lady Beatrice was of age, he came merely to know her wishes, and to express a hope that she would continue to place in him and his firm the confidence the Earl her father had always reposed in him.

To this Beatrice answered in the affirmative; and then Lady Junia rose, and said,

“ Well, Beatrice, should you change your mind, you will only have to drop a line to me at Palermo, and I shall be only too glad to come and fetch you or to send for you. Of course, my dear brother’s sad and most unexpected death has been a great blow to me, and it would be a comfort to me to have his only child with me at such a time ; but, as Mr. Drummond says, you are of age and are your own mistress, and I can only say I wish you had agreed to come with me for both our sakes.”

She then embraced Beatrice and departed, followed by Mr. Drummond.

Lady Beatrice, in the first excitement caused by the news of her father’s death, and in the presence of her beloved Alphonse, had not fully realized the dreadful fact that she should never see that kind, indulgent parent again ; that he was gone from her for ever ; that she was now, indeed, an

orphan; and that her aunt, for whom she felt little affection or respect, was her only near relative now.

She wept bitterly throughout the night, which I, hoping to comfort her, passed with her. Towards morning she fell asleep, and so did I.

It was late when she woke, and the first object on which her eyes, red and swollen with weeping, fell when she did so, was a beautiful bouquet of white jasmine, lemon blossoms, orange flowers, and wild arum, or "cappuchini," and a note from Alphonse de Monleon.

Love will still be lord of all, even of the mourners; and though, on waking, her first words had been, "My father! my poor, dear, kind father!" yet this delicate attention from her lover directed her thoughts into another channel.

"He *does* love me very dearly, Ada," she

said, as she read the impassioned note which, with the bouquet, Proudfoot had placed on a table by her bedside while she slept. "Oh that my dear father had known Alphonse!—have loved him, and approved of our union!"

I thought to myself that nothing could have been more unlikely than that a very proud English peer, with fifty thousand a year, should have approved of the union of his only child, heiress to his title and estates, with Alphonse de Monleon, who, though in reality of a much more ancient family than himself, had no income but that he derived from letting the greater part of the Palazzo Monleon, and from the sale of his lemons, oranges, and olives. But I took care not to express my opinion.

After all, what did it matter now? Was it not fortunate for these true lovers that the Earl had died before he had received

Beatrice's letter—before any objections raised by him to the match, any disapproval of his daughter's choice, or refusal to sanction their union, could have embittered their courtship, and perhaps (with one so duteous and conscientious as Beatrice) have made it seem that in following the dictates of her heart, she was disobeying her only parent?

With true delicacy, Alphonse did not intrude on Beatrice during the first week of her mourning for her father; but he wrote twice a day, and sent her flowers every morning and evening.

When at length, with her full permission, he did come, he started to see the change in her appearance, wrought by grief and her deep mourning garb.

In general, Beatrice delighted in light colours and delicate silks or muslins. Pale blue (which the French so pertly call *le fard des blondes*), *rose des Alpes* (scarcely less be-

coming), lilac and silver grey—these were Beatrice's favourite colours; and all her dresses,—which were made by first-rate Parisian *modistes*,—were elegantly trimmed with lace and ribbon, so that nothing that taste and skill could do were wanting to set off her fair blonde beauty.

She looked very interesting in her deep mourning; but it showed out in strong relief the transparent whiteness of her skin, and the thinness of her tall form. Her dress was of black crape over black silk, and Alphonse was so much affected at the first sight of her, that tears rushed to his eyes, and he could not speak.

As I considered them now as regularly affianced lovers, seeing there was no one who had a right to oppose her choice, I left them; for I knew that their hearts were overflowing, and that my presence was as great a restraint to them as it was a misery to me.

CHAPTER VII.

ARRIVAL OF OLD FRIENDS.

February 14th.—Mr. Fenwick, who during Lady Beatrice's week of seclusion had confined himself a great deal to his hotel with Harry Blake, now hearing that Alphonse de Monleon had been received, thought he ought to be welcomed too, and called to propose that we should all avail ourselves of the glorious sunshine of this, St. Valentine's Day, to pay a long-projected visit to Monaco. I found out afterwards that he had spent the interval since his last

visit in getting up the history of this, the most historically important place in the whole Riviera. He had hired a carriage for my mother and himself, but the rest of the party were to go as usual—the ladies on donkeys, and the gentlemen on foot.

We were making our preparations for an excursion which promised to be a delightful one, when a ring at the door-bell was followed by the sound of voices in the passage, and I started and crimsoned with surprise and joy, when a clear, shrill, well-known voice uttered the words, "*Vive le Roi!*"

That voice, these words were associated with my earliest recollections. "Mignon!" I cried; "Mignon here! Then the dear old Count must have arrived; for never would he have trusted Mignon to any one else. Wild with joy, I rushed downstairs and into the arms of the dear old Count. 'Mignon,' as brilliant in plumage and as viva-

cious as ever, fluttered his bright green wings for joy, as he saw me. He flew into my bosom, and gently pecked my lips with his ebon beak. Then he nestled in my hair, combing out two long curls I wore, holding them in his black claw, and drawing them through his beak.

When the old Count, who wept as he kissed me on both cheeks, calling me '*chère petite*,' '*pauvrette*,' and '*ma chérie*,' at length released me, the Signore, the dear, dear Signore, who had been hiding behind the door, came forth; and my mother, who had also heard and recognized Mignon's shrill voice, came down, fearful, agitated, and yet overjoyed to welcome two of my dear father's best and oldest friends. They both followed her to the drawing-room, where the Signore explained that he was on his way to join Garibaldi; and that the Count, who had long been pining to see his dear friends, had

proposed to accompany him as far as Mentone, and there to spend a week or two, after which, he meant to return to Moordell and his pupils there.

Mr. Fenwick, who was not at all pleased at the interruption of the excursion, at which he expected to show off so much erudition, at once proposed to the Count and the Signore to join us, offering them a seat in the carriage he had hired. They would, I am certain, have preferred remaining at our house, for they had travelled all night; but they knew Fenwick of Fenwick well, and they were both of those unselfish natures which are always ready to give up their own comfort and convenience to that of others. So Mr. Fenwick got the party off at last,—my mother by his side in the carriage; the Count and the Signore opposite to him; Beatrice on her favourite donkey Brunetta, with Alphonse by her side; myself on

Biondina, with Harry Blake for my cavalier.

No June day in England could have been more brilliant or more balmy. Every one was in good humour. And though Beatrice, in her deep mourning, and with her pallor and her thinness, created a painful interest in all who gazed on her, I knew, by the manner in which she bent her head to listen to the earnest words of love and comfort addressed to her by Alphonse de Monleon, that he whom she had chosen as the guide of her youth, the partner of her life, the husband of her heart, was all the world to her. She might have said with Andromache—

“ ‘ Yet while my Hector still survives, I see
Friend, father, brother, lover, all in thee ! ’ ”

Harry Blake and I were amused to see that, while Mr. Fenwick was discoursing learning on every object of interest, every

distant ruin and important building, as the carriage drove along, the poor old Count and the Signore, lulled by the motion of the carriage, and worn out with their long journey, had fallen fast asleep ; and no flash from Mr. Fenwick's purblind eyes had power to awake them.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXCURSION TO MONACO.

February 14th.—We had not proceeded far on our way to Monaco, when, from some remarks the donkey-drivers made, Beatrice and I discovered that it would be almost impossible for Alphonse de Monleon and Harry Blake to perform the journey on foot, or for us to get to Monaco on donkeys. An empty vetturino appearing just as we had arrived at this conclusion, we hired it, and discharged our donkeys and their drivers—much to the annoyance of the latter, and the delight of the former.

The road to Monaco is about the roughest along which I ever travelled. It follows that to Nice, above the Cape St. Martin, and then winds down below Roccabruna, which nestles among the broken crags of the hillside. Almost from the outset the white walls of Monaco are in view. The town stands on a lonely rock, but numerous valleys have to be crossed before one reaches the town. It is a constant succession of up-hill and down-hill all the way, and the jolting one has to endure baffles all description.

These valleys are, however, beyond description beautiful, with every shade of green and every variety of foliage. The rocks are bordered with magnificent euphorbias; coruba-trees, vines, and olives contribute their varied hues. Perhaps it is owing to the torrents, that foam and dash through every valley, that the verdure is so rich, varied, and luxuriant. The delicate

erba di fontana, a species of fern, grows in tufts in the walls of Monaco.

At a little ruin on the right, Mr. Fenwick halted, and informed us—having first summoned Harry Blake to his side—that this ruin was the Chapelle de Bon Voyage, once a pilgrimage of great celebrity, to which people from great distances resorted to pray, before starting on a voyage; that now a few of the people of Monaco alone resort to this shrine, or believe in its sanctity.

“The top of yonder height,” said Mr. Fenwick, stretching out his hand (but not exactly in the right direction), “is surmounted by a rock called Le Moine; you will see it closely resembles a monk with a cowl over its head.” Then he added, “Higher up, you see the nun looking down on her friend the monk.”

Having delivered himself of this speech, he allowed us to proceed; but as we passed

the little custom-house of Monaco, and reached the village of Veilles, which stands on a shelf of the tufa-rock, he called out to us that "Veilles was the *Vigiliæ* of Augustus, and that in his time it was well guarded by the soldiery." We stopped for a few minutes to listen to his discourse, and to admire the beautiful torrent which rushes under and over an exquisite profusion of cacti, aloes, and hanging plants of every variety.

"When I was last here," said Mr. Fenwick, "a large stone had been found here, bearing the inscription:—

JUL. CÆSAR

AUGUSTUS IMP.

TRIBUNITIA

POTESTATE.

D. C. L.

A little further on," he added, "is a ravine, once the stronghold of the 'Barbets,' a band of ferocious mountaineers, of the brigand

kind, who massacred a great number of French soldiers; and during the invasion of 1792, committed crimes surpassing in cruelty and rapacity those of the banditti of Naples. And now," said Mr. Fenwick, "if agreeable to all parties, I should be glad if my young friend Harry Blake would change places with the Count or the Signore. My eyesight being somewhat defective, I want Harry Blake—with whom I have studied the subject—to tell me when the chapel of Santa Devota comes in view. It can matter very little to the Count or the Signore in which carriage he finishes his nap."

Harry Blake was not much pleased with the change. He and Alphonse de Monleon were, in my opinion, much more pleasant company than Mr. Fenwick; but he at once agreed to his patron's request, and the dear old French Count, with Mignon in his bosom, took Harry's place.

How I wished I had brought my sketch-book, when, at the entrance of the Valley of Gaumatis, the last of the valleys we had to pass before reaching Monaco, I saw the rocks which form its northern barrier divide to open a passage for a foaming, dashing mountain torrent, to make its way to the sea. The pencil might convey, but I fear the pen cannot, the effect of the lofty arch spanning the chasm, and of the beautiful little chapel in the ravine by the streamlet's side.

The chapel is painted outside with coats of arms, and is approached from the road through an avenue of holm-oaks.

At this spot we all stopped, by Mr. Fenwick's commands. He was well up in the history of Santa Devota; and this little chapel is all that remains of her once famous monastery and shrine.

It is so beautifully situated, the scenery surrounding it is so singular and so sublime,

and the chapel itself so quaint and suggestive, that I was glad to be allowed to halt and examine it, although it contains nothing but a few bad pictures and some dirty old candelabra.

“Santa Devota,” said Mr. Fenwick, “was by birth a Corsican. She was a Christian virgin, cruelly tortured and martyred in the reign of Diocletian, by the Roman Governor of Corsica. There are two interesting traditions concerning her,” he added. “I will relate them both, and leave you, ladies and gentlemen, to accept which you please.

“One legend concerning Santa Devota asserts that after her martyrdom, the vessel bearing her remains was wrecked off Monaco, and that only one plank of the ship reached the Port of Hercules. To this plank the body of the fair saint was lashed, and on it was an inscription to the effect that the body was that of the Corsican virgin-martyr Santa Devota.

“According to the other and more popular tradition,” said Mr. Fenwick, “the Governor of Corsica, the wretch who had caused this lovely young saint Devota to be most cruelly tortured and martyred, being resolved that she should not have Christian burial, commanded that her beautiful body should be burnt to ashes. But a priest and a deacon, being warned in a dream to remove the body of Santa Devota from Corsica, set sail with it, piloted by a sailor called Gratian, intending to make for the coast of Africa. But a south wind arose during the night, and drove them, in spite of all their efforts, towards Liguria.

“At dawn the next day, while the sailor slept, Santa Devota appeared to him in a dream or vision, told him to go on his way rejoicing, and to watch her body well, and observe what came out of her mouth, as that would be his guide as to the spot where she wished to be interred.

“When the sailor awoke, he saw, as did the priest and deacon, a white dove fly out of Santa Devota’s mouth, and wing its way towards Monaco. They watched it till it alighted in the Valley of Gaumatis, on the east of Monaco.

“On the spot where the white dove alighted the Saint was buried. An oratory was there built in her honour, to which was added a monastery, attached to that of St. Pius.—

“Now, ladies,” said Mr. Fenwick, “which of these legends do you prefer?”

We all agreed that the second was by far the most interesting and the most original, and, by one consent, the legend of the white dove issuing out of the saint’s mouth was accepted.

“The *fête* of Santa Devota, 27th January,” continued Mr. Fenwick, “was formerly a very great day at Monaco. It was held in

this very valley of Gaumatis, and was celebrated with all possible splendour. The coin of the realm bore Santa Devota's effigy ; crowds of pilgrims visited her shrine. But there is a fashion even in saints and shrines, and that of Santa Devota has long since passed away. With the pilgrimages ceased the profits of the shrine, and the starving brotherhood fled from Gaumatis to St. Pons, leaving their little convent to ruin and decay. Formerly the Prior and one other member of the fraternity, chosen by the Prince of Monaco, enjoyed a privilege of which they were very proud, and which they preserved to the last,—namely, that of reading Vespers on the eve of Santa Devota and high mass on her *fête* in the parish church of Monaco."

"Also," said Alphonse de Monleon, "they had the right to open the ball always given on the same occasion."

“I presume,” said Mr. Fenwick, not at all pleased at this interruption, “the Prior and his inferior brother danced together on that occasion; and if so, they were a couple after the heart of Mr. Spurgeon himself. For three days the Prior and his monks feasted at the Palazzo, and departed enriched by the liberality of the Prince, to whom, as a token of their homage, they always presented a basket of artichokes.”

“Santa Devota,” said M. de Monleon, “like the Port of Hercules, at the mouth of which her shrine stands, was famous once, but is so no more.”

“Classical authors,” said Mr. Fenwick sternly, “frequently allude to the Port of Hercules. It was the terror of the merchants of Genoa la Superba, for it was the refuge and the stronghold of robbers and assassins—in other words, pirates.”

While we stood gazing at this little port,

now almost filled up, and no longer of any importance to the world, the little steamer from Nice came in (it does so three times a week), and music and merry laughter and gay conversation broke in upon these haunts of "the past," and gay ribbons and many-coloured draperies contrasted with the grey ruins of Santa Devota's shrine.

There would be no signs of life in this once famous port and more famous shrine but for this little steamer, and for the fishing-boats with their tall white sails and the scarlet caps of the fishermen.

We saw two or three boats which M. de Monleon told us were employed in fishing for a sort of sea-chestnut, called "*frutti di mare*."

The dear old Count told us that during the first Revolution a great number of noble *émigrés* escaped to this port, and thence got on board foreign vessels—no matter whither

they were bound so that they bore "*les aristocrates*," and the valuables concealed about their persons, away from the guillotine and the "*sans-culottes*."

There have been some attempts to make a fashionable watering-place of this antique Monaco. On the opposite side of the Bay we saw a row of unfinished baths, which, if completed, would have been very handsome.

"Well begun is half done," said Harry, laughing; "but these baths, I fear, will never be more than half done."

By Harry Blake's advice we repaired to the Hôtel des Étrangers, a charming resting-place; and there we dined together, merrily and in great comfort. Everything was good of its kind, the wine especially.

Having rested and refreshed ourselves, we divided, and half our party took the upper road through the Porte St. Antoine,

the other half preferred the lower road, leading through the Porte-house into the Promenade St. Martin, *alias* the Boschetto.

Here I saw aloes in full bloom and in the highest perfection. The cactus grows here in glorious profusion ; its brilliant, massive, wax-like petals thrown out in stronger life by the dark foliage of the cypresses. The golden stems of the aloes, too, run up beside the funereal trees, and, with their masses of blossom, try to out-top them. Every wall, crag, and cliff is tapestried with beautiful flowers. The gorgeous Flora of the tropics sits enthroned on the heights of Monaco. Yellow meads of asphodel, whose starry golden flowers form an earthly firmament, seem to challenge the brilliant geraniums to a contest for the palm of beauty. Stocks rise between the scarlet and gold of the geraniums and the asphodel, like robes of royal purple at a military ball, where scarlet

and gold predominate, and noble palm-trees unfurl their green pagoda-like tops in the deep blue sky, giving to the scene the air of a landscape in the Arabian Nights.

As one stands on these heights, one has the blue sea on either side, glittering and rippling below. The coast is very undulating and varied—all peaks and headlands.

The white houses of Monaco, and the deserted convent of the Visitazione, rose behind us, and the whole scene was the most beautiful my eye had ever rested upon. The promenade had a very animated appearance. On every terrace were groups of elegantly dressed ladies, walking, reading, and talking, while their children sported in the sunny air, gay as the butterflies they chase, and blooming as the flowers they culled unchecked. Monaco struck me as being the most comfortable-looking town I had seen in the South. The houses, which, in old en-

gravings, are represented with quaint windows, from whose ledges linen and fishing-nets are hung out to dry, now are all modernized, losing the picturesque, but gaining in neatness and cleanliness.

Mr. Fenwick told us that the portico of the large and handsome church of Santa Barbara is a fragment of the Roman temple. The Princes of Monaco have a burial-place here.

We were much interested in some of the pictures, which are very old.

Honorius the Bad has a fulsome inscription on a monumental tablet here.

“Believe a woman or an epitaph!” said Mr. Fenwick, who was not half satisfied with the attention paid to him.

I am sorry to say there is a gambling-house at Monaco,—it seems out of place here. There is an air of cloistered sanctity about Monaco, quite out of keeping with the

haunt of vice and profligacy. It shocked me, in spite of its pretty garden, as it would have done to see a gambling-house at Oxford or at St. Omer's, the latter being one of the most monastic towns I have ever visited.

The palace at Monaco is an immense building, covering a vast space, and built in every conceivable style of architecture. It has been added to by successive generations of Princes, according to the fashion of the age, and the individual taste of each successive master. The great Grimaldi hall is well worth visiting. The mantelpiece, of colossal size, is said to have been hewn out of one block of stone ; the workmanship is exquisite. Traces of former grandeur abound in this noble palace. Mr. Fenwick told us that formerly, and indeed till within a few years, a ball was given annually in the great hall of this

palace, in honour of Santa Devota, on her fête day,—and that high and low, rich and poor, danced at this ball—the nobility and gentry occupying one end, and the humbler visitors the other, never intruding on their superiors, although there was no actual barrier raised between them.

The Princes and the members of the royal family did not join in the dance, but watched the dancing from the music gallery.

Mr. Fenwick told us that in the last of a desolate suite of rooms, which were pillaged in the time of the Revolution, a Duke of York died. This Duke of York, the *custode* told us, was brother of a king of England, but he did not know what king; nor could any of us make out what Duke of York it could be. It seems he was taken ill at sea—so ill that he was obliged to land, and that the then Prince of Monaco offered him apartments in his palace.

In the room in which his royal highness is said to have died there are vestiges of great magnificence—gilding, carving, frescoes, and other remains of grandeur. This apartment is still called the Duke of York's room.

Harry Blake says he thinks the Duke of York alluded to was brother of George III., second son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and Augusta his princess.

The *custode*, who, in spite of Mr. Fenwick, would tell his tale, said that a ship came from England to bear away the Duke's remains with great pomp, and that, in return for the hospitality shown to the Duke of York, some prisoners from Monaco, being taken during the war with France by the English, were treated with the greatest kindness, and at once set at liberty.

Nothing can be more picturesque than the courtyard of the palace—with its cloisters on

either side covered with frescoes, and its exquisite antique friezes.

A curious twisted staircase leads to the west wing. The east wing is inhabited by the modern Princes.

I much wished to be allowed to see these apartments, as I had heard from Lucia, who has a cousin in the service of the royal family, that they are very magnificent, and that the picture gallery possesses many *chefs-d'œuvre*,—among others, several of Raphael's masterpieces.

It seemed a great pity not to be able to see things so well worth seeing. But, all over the Continent, worthless pictures are exhibited gratis, while any really worth seeing are either quite inaccessible, or only exhibited to those who can afford to pay as much as in England one gives for admission to a whole collection of masterpieces.

Mr. Fenwick said that in the churches in

Belgium and France a copy of some celebrated *chef-d'œuvre*, for which the edifice is famous, is shown to the unpaying multitude; but if a tourist wishes to see the original, he must pay, and pay highly, for the gratification; and then the copy is turned round on a sort of axle, and the original appears in all its unapproachable beauty. It is thus with the altar-piece at Malines, and with the scourging of our blessed Lord at Antwerp.

The gardens of the Prince's palace, which are singularly beautiful, we did see. Mr. Fenwick, who knew what was customary, having been at Monaco several times before, gave his card to the porter, who, for a few francs—I think three—obtained the requisite permission from the Commandant.

By a passage between the east and west wings we reached the gardens. They consist of terraces, covered with blossoming aloes, brilliant geraniums, myrtles, and thyme,

that reminded me of a bank at Moordell, whereon "the wild thyme grows."

There is a lovely view of the Bay from the garden. The rocks are covered with prickly pears, a fruit which seemed to be valued here, for a man is let down in a sort of sling to gather them. I remember once at the Hodgsons' they had some at dessert, which came from Covent Garden, and I thought them most unpalatable, having, it seemed to me, almost a poisonous taste. They may have a much finer flavour here, but I had no opportunity of tasting them.

Embosomed in coruba-trees are the baths of the town; they are said to be very comfortable, and are much frequented in the almost tropical heat of the summer months.

Mr. Fenwick told us that in 1523 Prince Lucien was murdered by his nephew Bartholomew Doria, of Dolceacqua.

It was retributive justice, for Lucien him-

self was a usurper and an assassin—a fratricide, indeed, if not a regicide, for his victim was John II., at once his brother and his sovereign. It was a very long and a very involved story, and Mr. Fenwick was at least an hour in telling it. All I remember of it is that it was a tale of very black treachery, and that, at the supper which preceded the murder, conscience made such a coward of Bartholomew, that it is a marvel his intended victim's suspicions were not awakened.

Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.
Lucien was blind to his nephew's livid pallor, tremblings, absence of mind, and strange disquiet. He fancied he was ill, or out of spirits, and put his beautiful little child into his arms to cheer and comfort him; but the conscience-stricken wretch trembled so violently, he could not hold the child. Mr. Fenwick's account of the actual

murder was very dreadful, but he seemed to delight in the horror we all expressed. One would have felt much more for Lucien, who fell the victim of his nephew's poniard, had he not himself been an assassin and a usurper, more guilty still, inasmuch as he killed a brother, and Bartholomew an uncle. His object, too, was usurpation, and Admiral Doria was implicated in his foul attempt, but the people would not have him to rule over them. They were determined to avenge, if possible, the death of their Sovereign Prince; and in the end, Bartholomew, though in possession with his followers of the greater part of the palace, and though his brother, Admiral Doria, with his galleys, was in the Port of Hercules, of course to aid and abet him, he agreed to retire if the enraged inhabitants of Monaco would spare his life. Lucien's brother, the Bishop of Grasse, left nothing undone to

discover his retreat and punish him for his crime ; but Bartholomew fell at the siege of the Castle of Parma, leaving a name black with crimes, in which Admiral Doria, his brother, was of course implicated.

CHAPTER IX.

MY MOTHER'S ILLNESS.

February 28th.—We were all very much delighted with our interesting visit to Monaco; on the whole, the most interesting of all the interesting places I have seen in the South.

The excursion, however, is a very fatiguing one; and my dear mother, whose state of health at times causes me very serious uneasiness, was so tried, that while we were sitting at tea after our return she suddenly fainted. Her swoon lasted several minutes, and no pen can describe the anguish I en-

dured while she continued insensible. So white, so corpse-like did she look, that I saw all present believed that her gentle, pious spirit had really taken flight. Harry Blake, who is devotedly attached to my mother, was almost as terrified as myself. He started off in search of Dr. B——, whom he luckily met not very far from our door.

My mother was recovering when the doctor came in, but I saw that he was uneasy about her. He looked very grave while he felt her pulse. He ordered Bessie to sit up with my mother, and said he would come early in the morning, when she was less fatigued, to examine her lungs and her heart. I do not think her lungs can be affected, for she has no cough; but her heart—oh! with what terror I heard him speak of her heart! Her mother and two of her sisters died of heart complaints. Oh, if I should lose that angel mother too, then I should indeed be

desolate and alone in the world ! And yet I have often thought of late that there was something almost unearthly in the marble whiteness of her lovely face.

I would not let Bessie sit up with my mother. I felt I could not rest out of her dear presence. She made me lie down on the bed beside her, and we talked a good deal together. She spoke of my father—of her unspeakable love for him—of the fever of vain longing that had consumed her heart ever since she saw him last—of the bliss it would be to her to be certain she should not survive him long, were it not for the agony of leaving me, her only child, behind, unprotected and alone.

“ Oh, my Ada !” she said, “ if I could but see you happily married, I should be able to die in peace.”

“ But you would leave your poor Ada broken-hearted,” I said.

“Yes, for a time,” replied my mother; “but you are so young, my Ada, and it is in the nature of things that the old should die before the young. Why is not Mr. Fenwick a man you could love? or why is Harry Blake so lowly born—so very lowly born?”

“Mother,” I cried wildly, weeping, “my dear father’s death almost broke my heart; but then I loved, and I believed myself beloved by, Roscommon Lyall; and there was comfort, there was refuge in that thought. Now I can never love, or believe in love, again; and if you leave me, I must die.”

“I will pray to be spared, my Ada, till you are a happy wife,” said my dear mother; “but if you knew what a lone, desolate creature I feel since your darling father’s death, you would scarcely wish to keep me here. And now I think I can sleep a little, my Ada; so let us drop this very painful subject, and try to sleep, perchance to

dream—to dream of him,” she added, in a low voice, “and of our meeting where sobs and farewells are a sound unknown !”

Wearied out with the fatigues of the day, and the painful excitement of the evening, I fell asleep by my mother's side, and dreamt of a wedding, at which I was the bride.

CHAPTER X.

FOREBODINGS.

February 19th.—I woke, nervous and unrefreshed, and with a sense of some new sorrow and anxiety hanging over me.

My mother still slept ; but as the morning light stole through the curtains and lighted up her pale face, I remembered, with a throb of anguish, that Dr. B—— was coming at an early hour that morning, to examine her heart and lungs with a stethoscope ; and I grew faint with, as I thought, what the result of that examination might be. If Dr.

B—— detected organic, *alias* fatal disease in either of those vital organs, I knew that I should feel much as a wretch must feel who hears the judge pass sentence of death upon him. Oh ! how the life-long tenderness and devotion of my dear, dear mother recurred to mind, as the possibility of my losing her crossed my memory, causing my heart to flutter and faint within me ! I could not lie still, while every limb trembled with agony of my apprehension. I rose very gently, not to disturb her slumbers.

Dr. B—— had ordered a composing draught, and, by the soundness of her sleep, I supposed it had taken effect. I went into my own room to make my toilet.

I met old Bessie on the stairs. She followed me to my chamber, to inquire how her mistress had passed the night. Bessie was a devoted creature, but, like the generality of servants, she was a Job's comforter,

very tactless and very fond of exciting horror and alarm.

“Poor dear missus!” she said, “I never thought she’d mak’ auld banes, when aince Master was ta’en awa’.”

“Oh, Bessie,” I cried, “don’t say such dreadful things. The doctor has not formed any opinion yet.”

“But I ha’ formed an opeenion, Miss Ada,” she said, “and sa ha’ your dear mither hersel’. She kens weel, sweet leddy, she’s na lang for this warld. Why, wha’ think ye mad’ her sa joyfu’ when Squire Fenwick cam’ here? Simply this—I ken it weel fra wha’ she said her ain sel’ to me—says she to me, ‘Oh, Bessie, Bessie! if sa be I should be took sudden, as I aft-times think I may be, Fenwick o’ Fenwick, wha sa luved your maister, will na let me lie alane in yon gloomy foreign burial-ground. He’ll have my puir remains taken bock to Muirdell, let

it cost wha' it may, and I shall lie by the side o' my ain beloved husband. Nathing but his death could sae ha' parted us, and it may be that my death shall reunite us.' ”

“Oh, Bessie,” I sobbed, “when did my mother say that?”

“When I was helping to undress, Miss, the very night after Mr. Fenwick and Harry Blake arrived here; and wha's mair, Miss Ada, your dear mither—my blessed mistress—said to me: ‘Bessie, there's something wrang in my heart, and in heart complaints people aft-times have no warning, sa mind this if I should be suddenly ca'd awa', as ye ken weel I've na money, nor my darling girl neither, for sic a heavy expense. Ye'll tell Mr. Fenwick that it was my hope and prayer that he'd have my puir body conveyed to Moordell, and buried by the side of my beloved husband.’ ”

Bessie's heartrending discourse was cut short by the ringing of my mother's bell. Bessie hastened to obey its summons, and I, trembling and weeping, hurried after her.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DOCTOR'S VISIT.

February 19th.—Bessie and I found my mother awake, and looking and feeling so much better that I began to hope I had taken too serious a view of her case.

I longed for Dr. B——'s arrival, even while I dreaded to hear his step on the stairs. But at eighteen hope is the heart's prophet, and I felt my spirits rise when my mother herself declared that her night's rest had done her so much good she felt quite herself again.

Bessie, meanwhile, standing behind the bed-curtains, was trying to catch my eye; and when, at length, she succeeded in doing so, she shook her head, cast up her eyes, shrugged her shoulders, and endeavoured, by every despairing and portentous gesture and expression in her power to convey to my mind that there was no hope.

Lucia came running up presently to tell me that Dr. B—— was below; and Bessie, as I passed her on my way downstairs to speak to him, said in a hissing whisper, “It’s a bad sign when they thinks and feels so much lighter and better, Miss. The Lord have mercy upon her, poor dear, and npon us afflicted creturs, if we’re to be left behind in this outlandish forrin country.”

I could scarcely speak to Dr. B——, so much had Bessie’s dreadful prophecies upset me. He was very kind, and tried to soothe and comfort me.

"You will soon be very ill yourself, my dear Miss Moore," he said, "if you give way to alarm and anxiety; and then, should your dear mother be really ill, you will be quite unfit to nurse her."

"Tell me," I said, "for I must know, do you think she is in danger?"

"My dear young friend," he said, taking my hand, "you ask me a question which no physician in the world could answer. If, as I own I greatly fear, the heart is the seat of your mother's disease, she may, with great care, live to be old; but, in these cases, any great exertion, a sudden and violent shock, or even a joyful surprise, have proved fatal. However, I cannot even decide that the heart is affected until I examine your mother, so, with your leave, I will visit her at once."

* * * * *

There certainly are moments in our sojourn

here below in which a life of agony and suspense is concentrated.

Dr. B—— was, perhaps, not more than ten minutes examining my dear mother's heart and chest, and yet I seemed to live through an age of dreadful emotions in that brief period ; and yet I had time to pray—to pray so fervently, that it seemed to me that prayer urged by faith must reach the Throne of Grace, and bring down the Dove of peace and promise into my breast.

All the time Dr. B—— was bending over my mother, with the stethoscope to his ear and to her chest or heart, I knew that Bessie was going on with her maddening pantomimic prophecies, but I would not see her ; I felt as if she would drive me wild.

“ Well, Doctor,” said my mother, with a sweet smile, “ what have you discovered ?”

Dr. B—— replied, “ That with very great care, my dear lady, you may live to

see your children's children; but, at the same time, any violent emotions of any kind, and any great exertion or fatigue, might prove suddenly fatal. For your daughter's sake, you wish to live, I am sure."

My mother did not answer in the affirmative quite as readily as I could have wished; but, after a minute's lapse, she said—

"She is my only child, the sole comfort and solace of my widowed heart. Oh! it would be dreadful to leave her alone in the world. Weep not, my Ada! I will take all possible care of myself for your sake. You hear Dr. B—— says, with care and quiet, I may live many years yet."

There was a tone of regret in my dear mother's voice, as she said those last words; but I had to dwell only on the bright side of the case.

Dr. B—— had said she might live to be

old ; and she had promised, for my sake, to take all possible care of herself.

The Doctor took his leave, promising to see my mother again in the evening, and permitting her to leave her room and resume her ordinary mode of life. He ordered, however, that when our excursions were likely to be attended with much fatigue, my mother should not be of the party.

CHAPTER XII.

SEPARATION.

February 20th.—We had planned a visit to Esu for to-day; and Beatrice and Alphonse, who now seemed to live only for each other, were anticipating great delight from a picnic among the ruins when they parted at night.

Alas ! l'homme propose et Dieu dispose.

That morning's post brought a letter from Lady Junia Stamford. It had a very deep black edge to the envelope—deep enough for a widow in the first months of her widowhood—and a large funereal seal.

Beatrice trembled as she opened it : it was from her aunt at Palermo. It announced the sudden death of her son—the invalid—for whose sake she had visited Palermo.

She said, “ In my deep and lonely anguish I have thought of my dear brother’s only daughter ; and as you are now so strong and so well, my dear Beatrice, I think that you owe it to your *father’s memory—to me, his eldest sister, and to yourself*, to come to me, if only for a fortnight or three weeks, now that I am in such deep sorrow. I was, or rather tried to be, a mother to you when you were very young, and until my Italian sister-in-law wheedled your father into entrusting you to her care. You ought, now, to be a daughter to me, now that I am growing old, and am alone here in such sorrow. The people you are with are, I doubt not, very worthy and good ; but, even they will feel that it is your duty to visit me at

this time. Proudfoot can accompany you, and will be sufficient protection for you. I expect you to start at once, on receipt of this,—and I am, dearest Beatrice, your afflicted, but very affectionate aunt.”

Poor Beatrice ! how she wept as she read this letter ! And how many times, after having owned that duty compelled her to go, she declared she could not and would not leave Mentone. Leave us !—leave Alphonse—first in her thoughts, of course, though she named him last. My mother was consulted. She thought it was Lady Beatrice’s duty to go to her aunt in her affliction, and she said so. While we were discussing the point in the breakfast-room with my mother, Alphonse de Monleon arrived in high spirits expecting to set out directly for the picnic.

I shall never forget his agony—his despair—when he heard my mother say that

Beatrice must go to her aunt, if only for a fortnight.

“Only a fortnight!” he cried. “Only! why, it will seem an age! And who can tell, will she come back? Oh, never should those who love part, if they can help it. They may never meet again quite the same. To me, to part with Beatrice is a foretaste of death. And, after all, what is an aunt—I mean this lady? An aunt may be as a mother; but I have never heard my Beatrice say this aunt had been as a mother to her. And if she had, am I not more to you, Beatrice, than even a real mother? Am I not your lover—your intended—your affianced husband? Oh, do not go to Palermo until you can go as my wife; then we will go together. If we part now, I feel we part for ever! Write and say you will come when—when will you say, Beatrice,—mine!—the sooner the better.”

Beatrice glanced at her deep mourning dress, and shook her head.

Alphonse pleaded eloquently, for he loved Beatrice with all his heart and soul; but my mother felt she ought to go, and that very day the weeping girl set out with Proudfoot for Palermo. Proudfoot was in a very ill humour at being obliged to leave Mentone, for she was very much in love, and very jealous of the dashing young courier, to whom she had been fool enough to engage herself. Beatrice promised to be back in a week if possible, and said that nothing should induce her to stay more than a fortnight; but Alphonse shook his head and sighed, and would not be comforted.

* * * * *

The departure of Lady Beatrice put a stop to our proposed picnic for that day, and on the morrow it rained heavily. Poor Alphonse came to us early. He liked to be

with us in order to talk to me of Lady Beatrice. "If not the rose, I dwelt near her," and that made him prefer my society to any other.

To his great joy, and much to our satisfaction, a letter from Beatrice reached us that evening while we were at tea. It was couched in the most affectionate terms, and was written from the town of —, where they stopped to dine.

It contained a letter for Alphonse, crossed and recrossed; and by the colour that mantled on his cheeks, and the joy that lighted his eyes, I felt certain that it was all the most passionate lover could have desired. Beatrice in conversation and manner was not demonstrative, but I knew that she had both mind and heart, and from the tears that suffused Alphonse's eyes as he read her letter—her first love-letter—I felt certain that the tenderness and passion of her nature,

as expressed in that letter, was to him an enchanting surprise.

“ Ah,” he said, “ absence has its pleasures after all—how should I have known all that is in her dear heart, had she not written me this letter ?”

“ ‘ Heaven first sent letters for some wretch’s aid,
Some absent lover, or some captive maid,’

said my mother.

“ Oh, that is beautiful and nice !” said M. de Monleon. “ I must translate that into French and into Italian.”

Lady Beatrice had told him to write to her at the post-office ——, for she had ascertained that the mail, travelling all night, would be there before she should.

Alphonse was in a hurry to be off; he wanted to write and post his letters that evening.

I was very glad that his gloom and misgivings had been thus delightfully dispersed.

I could feel for him ; for I remembered when my unworthy idol Roscommon Lyall's letters were to me a source of rapture ineffable.

What power one human being may have over another ! There is something very awful in the thought that not only the earthly happiness of a dear one, but his or her peace through all eternity, may depend on the way in which we use the power given us over a loving, trusting heart. Thank heaven, Roscommon Lyall has ceased to exercise the smallest influence over my feelings, my destiny. A woman may love a man who *is* mean and sordid. Many do. But if once convinced that he is so, she cannot continue to love him. If she has once admitted into her mind the conviction of his unworthiness and cupidity, she no longer loves him.

The softening veil was removed from my

eyes now. I saw Roscommon Lyall as he was. I fully understood at last the whole tenor of his conduct to me. He had courted me because he believed me to be the heiress of Moor-dell Hall. Directly he was undeceived, he did not think it even worth while to take any pains to gloss over, explain, or excuse his desertion.

I blushed in the solitude of my own chamber when I remembered that a fine person, soft black eyes, white teeth, a clever sort of *persiflage*, fascinating manners, and an adroit assumption of contempt for others and intense admiration of me, all sham,—silly, credulous gull that I was,—should have won for this pretender, this mean pretender, that first love which woman should reserve for the real and the true—for the idol, not merely of her foolish fancy, but of her riper judgment.

How fortunate is that woman who gives

the first love of her heart to him who is destined to be the guide and partner of her life, and who is worthy not only of her love, but of that thorough respect, admiration, and esteem which the great Apostle of the Gentiles surely supposed the man must be fitted to inspire, when he said, "Let the wife see that she reverence her husband." Had my fate been differently ordered—had my uncle not been married—had he left no son, and had I been (as I was universally believed to be) heiress of Moordell, Roscommon Lyall would have worn his captivating mask till I was his, and my estate and inheritance his too; but I do not think he would have thought it worth while to wear it one unnecessary moment. What would have been my anguish when he had laid aside that mask, and I found myself the wife of a man whom I not only could not reverence, could not esteem or love, but *must* condemn and

despise? And yet what bitter, scalding tears had I shed, when first I lost what I then thought was the true love of the most loveable of men! I saw him now as he was, and ere long I was destined to know that in escaping Roscommon Lyall I had escaped something worse than a sordid, mean, calculating fortune-hunter. Roscommon Lyall was publicly proclaimed ere long to be an unprincipled swindler, a designing villain.

How often have we reason to rejoice that we have not the moulding of our own destinies, the mapping out of our own future! What seem to us the greatest losses, are often the greatest gains.

It was on the day after Lady Beatrice's departure, that the English papers were full of the fraudulent bankruptcy of the great house of Hodgson, Hodgson, and Lyall. There was a very able leader on the subject in the great paper, and in this leader it was

clearly proved that old Hodgson, as the head of a firm which, for more than a century, had been one of the most wealthy and honoured in the City, owed his present bankrupt, beggared, and dishonoured state solely to the reckless extravagance and nefarious practices of his son and of his son-in-law Roscommon Lyall. They, the junior partners, had speculated rashly, wildly—had lived like princes—had gambled, betted, had horses on the turf—they had hoodwinked the good old man, the senior partner — they had “cooked up” the accounts, as the leading article said, and had finally absconded together, leaving poor Mr. Hodgson, in his old age, to bear the whole brunt of their villany.

“Poor old Hodgson!” said my mother. “How cruel, how unfair to him; and how his wife must condemn herself for helping to deceive him about her worthless son! I

implored her to tell him the truth, and not to lend herself to a deception that might induce her husband to take the worthless young fellow into partnership. But no; she dreaded that her 'darling boy'—her prodigal—would be driven to despair, would shoot himself, if his father were not deceived into an idea that he was reformed—that he was no longer in debt, but was penitent, steady, and fit to be taken into partnership; and, now, through the weakness of his wife, the poor old man is ruined, disgraced, and will probably be a broken-hearted, miserable bankrupt. What must be poor Mrs. Hodgson's remorse!"

For several days the examination of poor old Hodgson, in the Court of Bankruptcy, was reported, and every day added some fresh items to the already begrimed characters of young Hodgson and Roscommon Lyall.

Mr. Fenwick's rage against the crafty and profligate young man knew no bounds. He then, for the first time, revealed the fact that Roscommon was the son of a sister of his, who, when very young and very silly, had married a man of whom she knew nothing. It was a runaway match; and in the end, Mr. Fenwick had reason to believe that this man (Roscommon's father) had been transported for forgery, and had returned with a ticket-of-leave. At any rate, he disappeared when Roscommon was a mere boy; and Mr. Fenwick had allowed his sister and her son enough to live upon until she died, and the young man chose to come up to town, to live on his wits and play the fine gentleman.

A very affecting letter from poor Mrs. Hodgson was forwarded to my mother from Moordell. She stated that they were living in great poverty, herself and her daughters

(Mrs. Roscommon Lyall included) ; that her dear husband, who was as innocent as a lamb, was in prison, and would only be released when this complicated and tedious examination was over. She added, that she blamed herself for all that had happened, for had she taken my mother's advice, and refused to aid her son in deceiving his father by his pretended reformation, he would never have been taken into partnership ; that had her son not been in the firm, Roscommon would never have become a partner, and would never have married her unfortunate daughter. As it was, poor Mrs. Hodgson said she saw nothing before her but the wash-tub or a charwoman's career, and that her daughters must get out as governesses if they could ; but if not, as maid-servants. She said her poor husband looked the ghost of his former self, and was so ill she thought he was not long for this world.

My mother shed tears over this distressing letter, and Mr. Fenwick, who had heard it read, said—

“The old fool deserves to be punished for deceiving a good husband for the sake of a worthless son; but as all this has been brought on her by my showy scoundrel of a nephew, I shall step in to help her a little. I have a small neatly-furnished house not far from Fenwick Park to let. It's a farmhouse, and a good little farm is attached to it. When old Hodgson has got his certificate of bankruptcy, they may go down there and he may try his hand at farming. I'll send them a couple of hundred to begin with, and then he must make the farm keep them. Now will you, my dear Mrs. Moore, take your 'pen and write for me to Mrs. Hodgson, telling her that I make her this offer because one of the villains who has ruined an honest man is a nephew of mine.”

My mother gladly wrote what Mr. Fenwick dictated, and Harry Blake rushed off with the letter, which was in time for the post.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANXIETY.

February 26th.—For several days Alphonse de Monleon was in the seventh heaven; for by every post he heard from his affianced bride. By every post he wrote in reply. At first Lady Beatrice was constantly alluding to her prompt return, and reckoning the days, the hours, and minutes till she should again behold her intended.

But after she had been a week at Palermo she suddenly ceased to write. Alphonse was in an agony of alarm and despair. He

feared she might be very ill. He came to consult my mother what he should do—to know if we had heard from his beloved.

It so happened that we had just received a long and very affectionate letter from Beatrice ; but in it she made no mention of Alphonse, nor did she say a word about returning to Mentone.

Alphonse wrote to her in an agony of despair, alarm, and jealous love. No answer was returned to this letter. He then resolved to set out for Palermo. “ I will not condemn her,” he said ; “ at least, not unheard. I believe her to be all that is noble, true, and good ; and fickleness forms no part of the character I have worshipped in Beatrice. It is possible her aunt may wish to part us. I know with what an unjust contempt and with what an unfounded prejudice English matrons of high rank regard alliances with the noblest-born of Italy or

France. I can believe any harm of Lady Junia ; I can believe none of my Beatrice. But I can endure this suspense no longer. I must go to Palermo. I must see Beatrice. I must know my fate."

My mother highly approved of this manly resolution ; and poor Alphonse de Monleon set out for Palermo, promising to write and tell us all, as soon as he had seen Beatrice.

"I think," said my mother, "that it is not impossible Lady Junia may be at the bottom of this mystery. She has the character of a very designing, plotting, interested woman. She is very poor, too, for a person in her rank of life. It would be very important to her to keep Beatrice under her guardianship ; and then she has two or three sons, besides him she has lost. How distressing it would be to such a woman to see Beatrice (a countess in her own right, and with her colossal fortune) marry a foreigner,

when, were she to fix on one of her cousins, it would be the making of the whole Stamford family! She would think, too, that she did right to prevent such a marriage as she would consider that with M. de Monleon, by every means in her power. It is not impossible she may have intercepted letters on both sides. However, poor Alphonse will soon know the worst; and I cannot believe that Beatrice can be feeble enough to have changed towards him, or weak enough to act except according to the dictates of her own heart."

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Our party was now very much reduced. My mother was not permitted by Dr. B—— to go on any of our excursions; and as it was thought a pity that I should not see everything worth seeing in this beautiful neighbourhood, I used to go out with Mr. Fenwick and Harry Blake in a carriage, the

old Count and Mignon keeping my dear mother company.

On one occasion it was proposed that we should go to Nice. We had seen nothing of Nice, and it is a place of too much importance not to be visited. I did not like to leave my mother for so long a time, but as she was a good deal better Dr. B—— consented to her being of the party.

CHAPTER XIV.

MYSTERY.

March 3rd.—This evening's post brought us a letter from Alphonse de Monleon. He is almost frantic. Beatrice, her aunt Lady Junia Stamford, and the whole party have left Palermo; and no one at the hotel where they were staying, and where Lady Junia's eldest son died, knows anything more than that another son of Lady Junia's had arrived, and that the whole party had set sail together in his yacht.

Poor Alphonse in his letter to my mother

implored her advice how to act. He said he was in great fear that the extreme agony of his mind, the alarm, the suspense, the jealous rage, mixed with the unutterable and yearning love which conspired to torture him, would cause him a severe illness, and thus prevent his acting at all. He said he at that moment had all the symptoms of brain fever, and he abruptly closed his letter, saying,—

“If you do not hear from me to-morrow, conclude I am ill. If you never hear again, you will know I am dead,—dead in this strange place, alone, at an inn. Oh, if Mr. Blake, or the Count, or the Signore, could come to me! It is so dreadful to be alone with strangers in such agony of mind and body.”

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At my mother's request and by her advice, the Signore set off at once for Palermo. It was not out of the route which the Signore

intended to take to join Garibaldi, and he had conceived so high an opinion of M. de Monleon, and so strong a friendship for him, that he readily agreed to go to him, and see what he could do to help and to comfort him.

“Perhaps,” said my mother, “if you set about it judiciously and cautiously, Signore, you may find out, at the hotel where Lady Junia and Beatrice were, and where Alphonse now is, some clue to this cruel mystery. It is my opinion that Lady Junia Stamford has boldly intercepted the letters both of Alphonse and Beatrice, in order, if possible, to bring about a marriage between her niece and one of her own sons, for she has several. I *must* think very ill either of Lady Junia or of Beatrice, and from all I know, I am inclined to acquit Beatrice entirely, and to believe that she is the victim of her aunt’s diplomacy and desire to enrich and aggrandize her own son.”

March 4th.—A miserably wet day. Our excursion to Nice is postponed in consequence. We miss the Signore very much ; but Harry is a great comfort to us,—he is so full of sympathy and intelligence, so well bred, and so constantly on the watch to assist and oblige.

The Count, who does not like young Englishmen in general, nor, for the matter of that, *la jeune France*, even says Harry is his *beau idéal* of a gentleman ; and yet the Count knows he is Betty Blake's grandson, and has all the conservative prejudices of a French nobleman of the *ancien régime*. It is wonderful that a young man so very lowly born as Harry, should really have *l'air noble*.

Alas ! how sad it is to think that Harry should be lowly born ! He is by far the most elegant, intellectual, and endearing young man I have ever met with. His

principles are so noble and so just ! His temper so gentle ! He is so truly brave, generous, and unselfish ! so refined ! so highly intellectual ! and, in face and form, a perfect model of manly grace, beauty, and strength. I see that Mr. Fenwick is decidedly attached to him. I think, from hints he now throws out, that he wishes me to love and marry Harry ; and that if I did, he would make him his heir. But no ! A daughter of the house of Moordell might marry a poor man ; but a man of Harry's birth—no ! no ! no ! it can never be ! Alas ! that he were but gently born !

CHAPTER XV.

EXCURSION TO NICE.

March 1st.—As we were resolved my dear mother should run no risk, we resolved to make, of our journey to Nice, two days of pleasant excursion. Potervium, then, was our first resting-place ; but, as this place contains no hotel, we only stopped a little while at the small inn, of which the sign is a soldier, with flowing hair, and a glass of wine in his hand, and who, as far as the art of sculpture is concerned, is about of equal merit with the wooden Highlander at our tobacconists' shops in England.

Finding nothing to interest us in Poterivium, we resolved to pursue our journey as far as Villafranca.

My dear mother seemed in better health and spirits than she had enjoyed for some time, and was in raptures with the olive gardens that lead to the summit of the rocky hill which is the background of beautiful Villafranca. From the summit of the hill one has a good view of the almost Turkish-looking town, its churches and convents, its brown roofs and domes, interspersed with groves of cypress-trees, whose funereal green contrasted well with the clear ultramarine tone of the sea.

As far as fruit is concerned, one might fancy oneself in the market-place of Boulogne or Bruges, only that the piles of fruit, on close inspection, all save the plums, spoke of the sunny East. For on either side of the narrow streets, the richest treasures

of Pomona were piled up,—oranges, dates, figs, and bloomy plums. As for colouring, Villafranca is a rainbow of bright hues. The yellow rocks, the blue sea, the olive gardens, the cypress groves, and the gaily-painted houses, form a kaleidoscope of varied hues.

The inn is a scene of great bustle and excitement, and numbers of small boats are constantly plying between the shore and the large men-of-war at anchor in the harbour.

Mr. Fenwick told us that Villafranca was founded by Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily and Count of Provence, about the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century. The name of Villafranca, he said, was given it on account of the privileges which, from its very foundation, were ensured to it. The climate of Villafranca seemed to me more soft and delicious than that of Mentone, or any other of the Riviera.

We spent the night at Villafranca ; and in the morning, by my dear mother's express desire, we visited the little peninsula of St. Hospice.

Mr. Fenwick was quite at home in the ruined fort at the eastern extremity or cape of St. Hospice. He told us it was built by Victor Amadeus I., and destroyed by Marshal Berwick in 1706. He then begged Harry Blake to give him his arm, and led the way to the ruined chapel of St. Hospice.

"This interesting old ruin," said Mr. Fenwick, who was in high spirits, "was built by St. Hospice, a hermit of great sanctity, who lived in the sixth century, and who was honoured as a prophet as well as an anchoret, for he foretold all the great victories of the Lombards: '*Venient in Galliam Longobardi et vastabunt civitates septem.*'"

He then requested Harry Blake to ascertain and point out to us the site of Fraxinet,

once a renowned Moorish fortress, to which the Saracens owed much of their power and importance on this coast.

Nothing can be lovelier than the road from Villafranca to Nice. It is bordered by olive woods and fields. The latter are studded with pink anemones, just as our English fields are with daisies.

Nice, after a winter at Mentone, is like Paris after some months spent *en province*, or London after a long stay in a country town. It is a scene of gaiety, bustle, animation, and amusement—very delightful to the young, the healthy, and the happy; but rather overwhelming to the sick, the careworn, and the aged. And yet what a magnificent view from the windows of the Grand Hotel! what a lively scene on the Quai! what a vast expanse of sapphire sea! what noble palm-trees! what splendid quays along the river Paillon! and what enchantment

in those distant mountains, that lend such grandeur to the lovely scene! I thought Nice an earthly paradise; and perhaps, to my young eyes and heart, it was all the more enchanting because the beauty of Mentone is of so hushed and solemn a nature, in comparison with that of Nice.

To enjoy life, Nice seems to me above all places I have ever seen pre-eminent in attraction. To live the retired life of an invalid, or to watch a dear one suffering from pulmonary disease, Mentone is the most blissful retreat I have seen. Nice has excellent shops; but everything seemed to us exorbitantly dear: the beautiful carving in native olive was ludicrously so.

Mr. Fenwick told us that there is very little to interest the antiquarian at Nice. By Mr. Fenwick's desire, Harry Blake pointed out the castle, which looks down on the eastern extremity of the town, and

which was blown up by the Duke of Berwick, in 1706. He also pointed out the marble cross erected to commemorate the conference which took place between Pope Paul III., Francis I., and Charles V., in 1538. I was determined to see at least the outside of the house where the great hero of modern times, Garibaldi, was born, and where his brother was murdered. It is near the Boulevard de l'Impératrice. We also glanced at the house where Massena was born. He was the son of a small woollen-drafter, in a very narrow street close to Santa Reparata.

Nice has more than 30,000 inhabitants, and the immense number of visitors from all parts of the world during the winter months make Nice the most animated and amusing of modern Babels.

I was much pleased with the Nizzard *patois*, and liked it none the less when Mr. Fenwick told us that it is almost the identical

and musical *Romane*, in which the Troubadours sang the earliest love ditties. Our hotel was extremely comfortable, and, for Nice, which is one of the dearest places in the world, the charges were by no means unreasonable.

My dear mother, by our advice, rested the day after our arrival ; but the old French Count (with "Mignon" in his bosom), Mr. Fenwick, Harry Blake, and myself, set off, after breakfast, to ascend the hills which rise behind Nice, to the west.

The roads are broad and good here, while at Mentone they are like rude, steep staircases, cut in the barren rock. At Nice, on the contrary, they are broad, and slope upwards through fields of bright green flax and young corn ; and in the middle distance a range of purple hills meets your view, backed by a magnificent range of snowy mountains. One of the most remarkable of

the hills is called Le Pin de Pellet. It is covered with the vineyards which yield the celebrated and delicious wine of that name. We turned aside and descended among the olive groves to lionize St. Romane, a most picturesque and beautiful little hamlet. Its quaint old houses and gaily-painted campanile, embosomed in olive-trees, are full of picturesque beauties and choice bits for an artist's brush.

But to give any adequate notion of the peculiar charms of the towns of the Riviera, you must excel as much as a colourist as you ought to do as a draughtsman. In fact, I have never seen any pictures or drawings that do anything like justice to the fantastic mountain scenery, the quaint architecture, and the brilliant colouring of the towns of the Riviera.

After we had visited St. Romane we journeyed on until we came to a beautiful terrace

built by Nature's master hand, and from which one overlooks the large bed of the Var. It is fenced round by snowy mountains. The Seven Villages, rivals in beauty and grace, adorn the opposite bank. One of them, St. Jeannette, enjoys a reputation similar to that of our Lancashire—namely, all the women of St. Jeannette are said to be witches. St. Jeannette is built among the rocks, which rise in tall masses behind it.

Mr. Fenwick begged Harry to show us a very old nut-tree of enormous size, where the witches are supposed to hold their weird midnight meetings.

We had a very pleasant excursion, and returned home much pleased with our day in the mountains.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOING TO BATTLE.

March 25th.—Lady Day, and here unlike what Lady Day generally is in England—a day for ladies.

We returned to Mentone, and my dear mother felt so strong and so well that she was resolved to drive back without resting by the way. In the evening Alphonse de Monleon arrived, looking the ghost of his former self. He had been unable to learn any tidings of Beatrice. His hand was burning hot, and there was a wild fire in

his eyes that rather alarmed us. We said all we could to comfort him, and I only told what I believe to be true, when I asserted that I felt certain Beatrice was of a constant disposition and of a true and devoted nature. Her aunt, Lady Junia Stamford, I told him, might, for her own objects, have suppressed the letters on both sides, and got her off on a yachting excursion, under one pretext or another, but that I felt certain that, wherever Beatrice was, she was unchanged.

Poor Alphonse seemed to derive some comfort at first from my confidence in Beatrice's truth and constancy; but ere long his old despondency returned, and when he left us he said that he had now no hope but that of an early death on the battle-field; that he had promised the Signor Bernardini to join him at Garibaldi's head-quarters, and that he was only awaiting some little return of strength to set off.

“When Beatrice hears I am no more,” he said, “and that my last words were a blessing on her who has destroyed me, she will perhaps repent the cruel wrong she has done to one who made an idol, and who found it clay.”

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It was true, then, that our dear old friend the Signore was about to realize the dream of a life, and to fight for Italia Bella—Italia Unita.

We were all a great deal agitated at the thought of the peril to which one so dear to us all would soon be exposed. We knew what a war it would necessarily be.

“For Freedom’s battle, oft begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though often lost, is ever won.”

I could not sleep that night, though I was very tired, for thinking of poor Alphonse de Monleon’s breaking heart, and Signor Bernardini leading forlorn hopes,

performing prodigies of valour, and proving on the battle-field, perhaps with his heart's blood, how dear to the sons of Italy are the fame, the freedom, and the unity of that beautiful country, which they all believe will rise, like the phoenix from its ashes, to be once more what she was in her proudest days.

CHAPTER XVII.

BEREAVEMENT.

April 9th.—There is a long pause in my Journal, and I resume it now with a trembling hand, and with eyes blinded by weeping. My tears fall so fast as I write, that my page is blotted and blistered with those scalding drops. Oh, anguish ! oh, misery ! oh, cruel, remorseless death ! I am indeed an orphan now ! I know it to be the dark and dreadful truth, and yet I can hardly believe it as I write.

My angel mother has been taken from me !

I thought I had felt the deepest, wildest grief the human heart can know when my dear father died ; but then I had my mother—my beloved, excellent mother—to turn to, and I was affianced to one who seemed to me at that time to be the first of men.

Now I have nothing to love, nothing to love me, nothing to cling to. I am like the ivy, withering and trailing in the dust, trampled underfoot, when the beautiful tree round which it was entwined is felled.

How strange it seems to me that I have survived the agony and the shock ! Thank Heaven I was with her ! She wanted me to go to my own room to sleep on that last night of her dear, dear life !

She said, “ You look pale, my Ada. I

am much better to-night, my love, and I wish you to have a good long night in your own room."

Thank Heaven I would not leave her! Not that I feared any catastrophe; I had no idea that one could die as my angel mother did.

She asked me to read the Sermon on the Mount and John Keble's hymn,

"Why should we faint and fear to live alone?"

and then she said she felt disposed to sleep, and I lay by her side, and was soon in the land of dreams.

I woke when the morning sun came into the room, and almost at the same moment my mother woke.

She said, "Ada, my darling, draw up the blind and open the window. Let me see the glorious works of God,—the sea, the mountains, the olive groves; and yet, Ada, this morning I would rather look on the

sand-hills, the pine forests, and the purple moors of our dear Moordell."

I rose, drew up the blind, and rosy and golden in the sunrise lay the deep blue sea, with Corsica distinctly visible, the snowy mountains, the rose-coloured rocks, the olive groves, and the terraces bright with flowers of every hue.

"Ada," said my mother, "come to me—come quick. Hark, I hear your father's voice! See, see his hand—it beckons me! his form, it comes! his face, his dear, dear, unforgotten face, it smiles on me! Ada!" I rushed to her, I caught her in my arms. "Ada, my child, farewell until we meet again! Husband, I come!"

My mother fell back as she spoke these words. A strange mysterious change passed over her fine face. Alas! alas! it was an unmistakable change, and yet I tried not to see it, not to believe it.

I shrieked aloud ; I pulled the bell wildly ; I threw myself on that still breast. I started up ; Bessie came in ; I sent her for Dr. B——.

He came, Harry Blake came,—everybody in the house arrived. Some tried one restorative, some another, until Dr. B—— arrived, and then he ordered every one out of the room save Bessie, Harry Blake, and myself.

He approached the bed ; he placed his ear to the heart, he placed his finger on the wrist. He took up a hand-glass and held it to the white lips, and then he said—

“Weep for yourself, not for her, my dear young lady ! The sweet saint is in heaven now. She has passed away without a pang—no dismal terrors, no convulsive struggles. This is, indeed, what the French call the death of the elect ! Look at the angelic

expression of that face ! She is with the Lord, whose good and faithful servant she was ; and with the husband whom she so longed to rejoin. Weep not for her !”

CHAPTER XVIII.

MOURNING.

April 13th.—It was not in the first dreadful moments of this new and terrible bereavement that I felt the full extent of my irreparable loss. All who have mourned those nearest and dearest ones (and how few have not!) must be aware that the first stage of such a grief is not the most crushing and agonizing. There is so much to do—so much that it would be a want of honour for one lost treasure not to do. A kind of excitement seems to support us at first. We

move about and act, and even talk like ourselves, but we do not feel like ourselves. We realize nothing at first ; we are in a sort of trance. Then friends crowd round us, afraid to leave us to ourselves ; but it is in a later stage of this, the greatest anguish the human heart can know, that our friends should be on the watch to save us from despair. They hope and trust that we are getting over it. Alas ! that is the very time when our grief—though no longer the grief that finds vent in tears—is deepest and most dreadful to bear.

We have wept till feeling's founts are dry, and the fever of vain longing is raging more furiously than ever in our hearts.

Then at every turn we miss the loved and lost. Sleep forsakes our pillow, and the long wakeful night is crowded with terrible thoughts, torturing regrets always tinged with remorse, recollections of the past kind-

nesses, loving looks, gentle tones, kind deeds, of one never to be seen again on earth; and morbid fancy recalls every little unkind word or even thought—every shortcoming of ours towards the dear departed.

Then we contrast the warm, soft bed where we are lying with the cold damp grave, where, with no neighbours but the DEAD, lies one whom once it was our dearest duty and our greatest care to shelter from all cold, and damp, and night-dew.

If it is dark, wet, and windy, we shudder as we think of the dear one in the grave.

If the moon shines with a dim and silvery light, we think of the dear name its beams are lighting up, and of what lies beneath the monumental stone.

It is a long time before, in a later stage of grief, we are able to rend our thoughts from the death-bed and the grave of our hearts' darlings, and to raise them to the

inspiring conviction of the blest spirit's happy immortality ; but by faith and prayer that stage comes at last.

At first, no real mourner can believe that it will ever come ; but it does come to all believers who fervently pray for it. And to all now in the early stages of the greatest anguish the human heart can know, we say, PRAY ! Pray, even though at first you find no hope or solace steal into your hearts. Pray on ; the Dove of peace will descend at last, if you persevere in prayer.

Bessie had taken care to tell Mr. Fenwick what my dear, dear mother expected from his friendship for herself and my poor father ; but before he heard that she had looked to him to lay her by her beloved husband's side at Moordell, he had resolved to have her dear remains conveyed thither.

It was arranged, then, that Mr. Fenwick, Harry Blake, the dear old French Count, Bessie, Jock, and myself should set off for Moordell with my darling mother's dear remains.

The funeral over, Mr. Fenwick proposed that we should return to Mentone. (We had taken our house for the whole season.)

I was in delicate health, he said, with a cough and a constant fever.

He found the air of the South agree with him, and he could but believe that Lady Beatrice would return to me at Mentone, as she was in honour bound to do.

I was too much crushed and stunned to have a will of my own. I agreed to whatever Mr. Fenwick proposed.

He, Harry Blake, and Bessie made all the arrangements; and we set out with what had been the best wife, the best mother, and the truest Christian I have ever met with.

I shall not dwell on the journey, nor describe any of the places through which we passed, for I took no note of them. I saw everything through a black crape veil, both really and figuratively; and I thought that, like Niobe, I had wept myself to marble; until, at length, one fine afternoon we reached Moordell, and I saw the red and slanting rays of the evening sun on the purple moors, and lighting up the church and Vicarage windows. When I beheld the home of my childhood, and thought of the loving parents who had made it such a paradise to me, I,

“Like Israel’s crowned mourner, felt
The dull cold stone within me melt,”

and my tears gushed forth like rain.

We went to the Vicarage. Mr. Fenwick had communicated with the Vicar, who had insisted on our stopping there. His wife was absent on a visit to an invalid relative, and he would take no refusal.

My beloved mother's coffin was placed in the dining-room, just as if she had still been mistress of the dear old Vicarage; and the next day, at about one o'clock at noon, the funeral took place. Everybody in the village, and many people from those adjoining, followed the dear remains.

I was determined, as my darling mother had no son to officiate as chief mourner, to do so myself, and I was wonderfully supported; but that Mr. Lefevre told me I should be, when I mentioned my intention to him.

The walk was nothing, as the churchyard adjoined the Vicarage garden; and, on the whole, it was a sort of comfort to me to see my beloved precious mother laid to rest where, ever since his death, she had longed to be—by my father's side. I went through my part almost like one in a dream. I have felt that ceremony a thousand times more in thinking it over than I did while I knelt on

my black hood and cloak by the grave of my parents.

Harry Blake was extremely agitated, nay convulsed with emotion ; and many present, who had known my mother from the time of her arrival at Moordell as a bride, wept bitterly and sobbed, as they said "they had lost their best friend, and the sweetest, kindest lady the sun ever shone upon."

Never was any one more truly mourned than my angel mother.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WOMAN IN GREY.

April 30th.—Here we are again at Mentone. As I have now no parents, no home, no positive means of subsistence, and no definite prospect of any kind, I tacitly acquiesced in Mr. Fenwick's proposal, for I had nothing better to suggest, and indeed I was too much crushed to be able to think or act for myself.

The dear old Count was obliged to remain at Moordell. It was a great sorrow to him to part from his *pauvrette*, as he called me,

at a time too when he thought Mignon and himself might have been some comfort; but his income depended on his pupils, and a young French professor had recently arrived at Alnwick, and was industriously dispensing his very promising circulars, full of his high attainments and low terms.

“One consolation, I shall have *ma petite*,” said the dear old Count; “and I am sure it will be one to you, too. I shall be at hand to deck with fresh flowers de last resting-place of your dear parents, my best friends. I will make deir grave a garden of beauty, a littel paradis of sweets. Mignon and I will visit it every day, and very often will I write and tell you how beautiful it looks.”

By the time we were back at Mentone (for Mr. Fenwick was taken very ill at Lyons, and this delayed us ten days) Alphonse de Monleon had departed to join Garibaldi.

I was still too much prostrated by my grief to be able to decide what steps to take, but I felt I could not remain at Mentone without some married lady friend to act as a chaperon, even should Lady Beatrice return to me, when one day, while sitting with me talking of my beloved parents, Mr. Fenwick was suddenly seized with a fit. Bessie, who rushed in in answer to my shouts, declared it to be the "falling sickness"—and certainly he had dropped to the floor as if he had been shot. Harry Blake, who was with us at the time, rushed off for Dr. B——. Dr. B—— came at once, and decided it was epilepsy. Mr. Fenwick was carried into the nearest bed-room—that which had been Lady Beatrice's—and for some days his life was despaired of. However, he rallied a little at last, and then Dr. B—— had great hopes of him, for he said Mr. Fenwick had the constitution and the conformation of a Hercules.

Bessie and I were by this time very nearly knocked up with watching, and Bessie, her strong nerves much weakened with grief, was full of superstitious terrors, and of a vision which she declared she had seen not only at Moordell during her recent mournful visit there, but since her return to Mentone. This was an apparition, which Bessie declared to have haunted Moordell, its forests, sands, and moors for many years, and which was supposed to dwell chiefly at the Dower House of the Moore family.

“It’s the Woman in Grey,” said Bessie, trembling and turning very pale. “Many at Moordell have met her flitting about in lonely places; but ye maun weel remember, Miss Ada, that when Horry Blake war a lad he war haunted by this very Woman in Grey.”

I had a shadowy recollection of having heard something of the kind whispered, but

my dear parents were much too wise and too tender to allow any ghost stories to be discussed in my presence, and therefore the "Woman in Grey" was a forbidden subject.

"Weel I remember, Miss Ada," said Bessie, "my blessed master and mistress would na ha' ghaists or bogies mentioned in your presence; but for a' thot, they kenned as weel as I did that the ghaist, or sperit, or wraith ca'd the Woman i' Grey, did haunt Muirdell, and mony a time had way-laid and spoken wi' Harry Blake, in his young days. And noo, Miss Ada, as true as I'm a living Christi'n woman, the day I mysel' saw the Woman i' Grey twice, wi' my ain een, while we were at Muirdell lately; and wha's mair, I've seen her here in this forren ootlondish place syne we've been bock again."

"Seen her at Mentone, Bessie!" I said incredulously. "That must have been fancy, surely?"

“Na, na, Miss Ada,” said Bessie, shaking her head, “I’m na given to fancies. The first time war the evening we arrived at Muirdell Vicarage. Ye were a’ sitting in the sma’ breakfast-room—you, Miss Ada, Horry Blake, Mr. Fenwick, and the auld Count, the new Vicar a-greeting ye might and main—greeting mair than my ain sel’—when, looking fra the bed-room window, the blue room, ye ken weel,—the dear auld blue room, which we ca’d the spare room,—I saw the form o’ a woman i’ grey flitting amang the tombs and the yew-trees, and as I stood, turned amaist to stane wi’ the terror, she cam’ across our lawn (our lawn that war) and peered in at the breakfast-room window. The moonlight shone on her grey hood and grey gown. I could see but little o’ her face, but wha’ I did see war white as the face o’ the dead. I could na stir nor spake, but I sunk doon in a kind o’ a sick fit, ond there

I stayed till the Vicarage housemaid cam' to fetch me doon to supper.

"The next day, while the buryin' was going on, and a' were greeting sair, I ken na wha' mad' me raise my een fra the groond, but I did sa, and amaist hidden by the big auld yew-tree, I saw the gown and hood o' the self-same Woman in Grey."

"I dare say you did see a woman in grey," I replied, "but not a ghost in grey, Bessie."

Bessie shook her head.

"Wha' I saw was na canny, Miss Ada. And wha's mair, I've seen the self-same ghaist in the grey gown and hood since I've been bock here a matter o' three times. If it were na a sperit, how could it cross the water to follow us here?"

"Bessie," I said, "the next time you see the Woman in Grey, call me. We will solve this mystery together. Where was she when you saw her last?"

“On the terrace under Lady Beatrice’s window, Miss Ada,—there where Mr. Fenwick lies noo; and she was peering in at him and Harry Blake. I see her fra the upper windows and I run down, but before I could get to the window next Mr. Fenwick’s she was gane!—clean gane, as nae-thing but a sperit could gang! And, Miss Ada, anither time I saw her fra my window flitting along on the ither side o’ the street; and ance again I caught sight o’ her white face, and grey gown and hood, at a window in the Grand Hotel, a leetle higher up.”

Bessie was so positive, and seemed so much offended at my doubting the ghostly nature of the Woman in Grey, that I said no more on the subject. Indeed, Dr. B—— had arrived to visit his patient Mr. Fenwick, and had begged to see me on a matter of importance. I hurried down to him. He said he came to propose that as both Bessie,

Mr. Blake, and I were evidently quite knocked up with watching and nursing, and as Mr. Fenwick was no means "out of the wood," he came to say he wished that very night to send in an English nurse, who had been strongly recommended to him, a well-educated, experienced, middle-aged woman, who would undertake the night nursing, which would be a very great help, and we then should all be fresh and rested to attend to Mr. Fenwick during the day.

Of course I had nothing to say against anything Dr. B—— thought desirable or necessary, and it was arranged that the nurse should come at ten o'clock that night to take her place in the sufferer's room.

"There is one very great hope I have with regard to Mr. Fenwick," said Dr. B——, "and that is, that if I can get him through this very severe attack, a means I have devised for strengthening his nervous system

may tend to restore his sight. At present he can scarcely distinguish any object, but I have discovered that his is nervous blindness; and if his nervous system were properly strengthened, I believe his sight would be restored. However, the first object is to save his life; and I feel quite certain that the nurse I have engaged will greatly contribute to Mr. Fenwick's comfort and recovery, and perhaps save you a severe illness, for indeed, my dear young friend, you look like the shadow of your former self."

It was understood then that the nurse was to be installed that very evening, and that Harry Blake, Bessie, and I were not to have our rest disturbed. Our rest! I should say Harry Blake and Bessie, for sleep had almost deserted my eyelids since the death of my beloved mother.

* * * * *

Harry Blake was sitting by Mr. Fenwick's

bedside, and Bessie, seeing me looking, as she said, unco white and ailing, proposed to me to step out for a wee turn with her. I agreed, and we set out together.

It was a fine evening, and the air was soft and balmy ; the sea and the sky were flooded with gold and rubies where the sun was setting ; but all looked cold and grey in the east, where the crescent moon was peeping out.

I suppose it was, unconsciously to myself, the marked melancholy of my mind that led my steps to the cemetery at the very top of the steep hill, up which run Mentone's narrow streets. Bessie followed me. She, too, no doubt, was thinking of my beloved mother, for her honest eyes were full of tears.

Of course those who have recently laid their hearts' darlings to rest on the breast of Mother Earth cannot behold tombs and

graves without intense emotion. And yet, one generally finds mourners much disposed to wander about churchyards and cemeteries, although every wound bleeds afresh as they contemplate the last narrow bed, and read the epitaphs, in which affection would fain convey in a few lines the lost one's virtues, and the mourner's boundless love and cureless grief.

We were moving slowly along, our tears falling like rain, when Bessie suddenly caught hold of my arm and whispered, "Miss Ada! Miss Ada! I wish we were safe back agin. If there is na the Woman in Grey yonder among the cypress-trees and the tombs to the left!"

I looked in the direction she indicated. A female form, hooded and robed in grey, was moving slowly among the tombs.

"There is nothing in that woman to frighten you, Bessie," I said. "Let us go

round and meet her face to face, and you'll see that she's flesh and blood like ourselves, and that we have no more reason to be afraid of her than she of us."

"Oh, Miss Ada!" said old Bessie, trembling, and her teeth chattering, "ye little ken what ye're saying; that's the grey ghaist o' Muirdell Dower Hoose, as sure as I'm Bessie. For the love o' heaven, Miss Ada, come awa'. She's na canny. If ye'll na come awa' hame, I'll drop down amang the grave-stanes, wi' the dread that's come o'er me."

As I saw that Bessie's fear was only too real, and I feared its effect on her, old as she now was, I consented to "gang hame," as she said. And, in spite of her years and her terror, she almost ran all the way "bock agin," as she called it, until we reached the Maison Grimaldi.

The post this evening brought me two

letters of condolence—one from Signor Bernardino, whose paper was blotted, blistered even, with tears, as he spoke of the death of her whom he called his sainted friend, my angel mother. He wrote from the depths of his noble, feeling heart; and though every word he said renewed my grief, yet in his heartfelt, fervent tribute to his friend of nearly twenty years, there was a something soothing to my feelings.

His letter was dated from General Garibaldi's head-quarters, and so was the other letter I received by the same post. It came from Alphonse de Monleon. He was looking eagerly forward to an engagement with the Austrians, in which he hoped, he said, to do something for his country, for the name of De Monleon, and for himself.

“What think you,” he said in Italian, “I hope to gain for myself?—what, oh gentle friend of her I still idolize? A soldier's

grave. I hope, without a crime, to get rid of the agony life has been to me since Beatrice deserted me. No, no ! I will not say deserted me ! She is not fickle : she cannot be false, since a cruel fate tore her from me. She may return when I am no more ; and if she does, you must tell her, dear friend, that Alphonse de Monleon loved her to the last."

I was reading this touching outburst of true love, when I heard a carriage stop at the door. The next minute the drawing-room door was flung open, and Lady Beatrice rushed into my arms !

She was very pale and very thin, and I felt, as I looked at her, that she had suffered much since I had last embraced her.

Harry Blake was sitting in Mr. Fenwick's room, and we were *tête-à-tête*.

As soon as Beatrice was a little rested and refreshed by woman's cordial—a good cup

of tea—I asked her how it had come to pass that she had ceased to answer her devoted and affianced lover's letters, and how she could have made up her mind, knowing how devotedly he loved her, to start off on a tour without leaving any intimation of her route, or explaining her conduct at all.

“Ada,” said Beatrice, “I must first tell you with how deep a sympathy and how true a sorrow I heard of your irreparable loss: and indeed, I may add, of mine too, for, above all other women on earth, I loved and revered your dear, dear mother. It is an additional pang to me, when I remember all her virtues and her great goodness to me, to think that she must have died believing me false, ungrateful, and even disrespectful to her.”

“No, Beatrice, no!” I said; “you wrong my mother; she always said she was certain the mystery of your strange conduct would

be explained—that the enigma would one day be solved—and that she felt certain you were incapable of inconstancy, caprice, or indifference to him you had so tenderly loved, and quite incapable, too, of slighting friends so devoted to you as we were; and, she added, most firmly believed that both you and Alphonse were the victims of some deep designs and artfully-contrived schemes and plots of your aunt, Lady Junia Stamford.

“You know, Beatrice,” I added, “how much my mother disliked judging any one, or expressing an unkind thought or harsh opinion of any fellow-creature; but, in justice to you, she did say she felt certain you were a victim, not an agent, in events that nearly killed Alphonse de Monleon, and that have driven him to seek a grave—a soldier’s grave—under the banners of Italy, and her great hero Garibaldi.”

“ Oh, Ada !” sobbed Beatrice, “ you do not mean that Alphonse has been dangerously ill, and that he is no longer at Mentone, but with Garibaldi ?”

“ Yes, Beatrice, I do. It is a marvel he did not die at Palermo, whither he went, to try to learn what had become of you, and why you had ceased to answer his letters and treat him as your affianced husband.”

“ Ada,” replied Beatrice, “ I never ceased to write to him ; no, not at first, even when I received no answer to my letters, and when people from Mentone told my aunt—at least, so she said—that you and he were always together ; that it was evident to every one you were passionately attached to each other ; that all Mentone considered you engaged, and he not only spent all his evenings at your house, but went with you on all your excursions, ever by your side, your very shadow !”

“ But you did not believe such idle gossip, Beatrice ?” I said. “ You knew Alphonse too well, you knew me too well, surely, to believe him so feeble and so false, and your friend so treacherous.”

“ I know not what I thought, Ada. I could not think; but his not writing to me, as I then believed—although I have learnt since from Proudfoot that my aunt, as soon as she heard of my engagement, resolved to break it off, and boldly interrupted both my letters and Alphonse’s. Her object was to induce me to marry her second son, George Stamford, a person I could not bear,—that odious character, a hunting, drinking, smoking clergyman. Seeing there was no chance for George, she had over Arthur, a young fop, entirely taken up with his dress and his beauty. He has a yacht, and, under pretence of taking me a cruise for three days, she kept me at sea for a month.

Proudfoot became very ill in consequence of constant sea-sickness and thinking. She was convinced she was going to the —, and under this impression she begged to be allowed to unburden her heart to me in private; in fact, she had a confession to make to me. I had some difficulty in seeing Proudfoot in private, for my aunt was on the watch; but a storm coming on, she was taken so ill she was obliged to retire to her berth, and then Proudfoot confessed to me that she had been induced by Lady Junia to intercept my letters to Alphonse, and his to me; that she thought at the time she was doing quite right, as Lady Junia had assured her that I was likely to become the prey of a fortune-hunter and a Papist; and that it was my duty, as a faithful follower, to assist her in preventing so horrible a conspiracy from succeeding; but now that she saw death staring her in the face, she began to

doubt whether she had done right in deceiving her mistress, and helping to cross true love. She had had a dream too—and Proudfoot is a firm believer in dreams—warning her to confess all, and she added that she felt much easier now she had done so. As the weather continued to be very stormy, we put into Civita Vecchia, and Proudfoot began to recover as soon as she was on shore and in a comfortable bed. I had no sooner retired to my room than I wrote to my aunt, upbraiding her with the treachery and cruelty of her conduct, and informing her that I could never place any confidence in her again. I told her that when she received that letter I should be on my way back to Mentone; and that, although as a Christian I felt bound to forgive her, it would be very long before I breathe the same air, or dwell under the same roof, with one who had deliberately blighted my happiness

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and that of one dearer, far dearer to me than myself, my honoured and affianced husband, le Comte Alphonse de Monleon. Long before my aunt was strong, Proudfoot and I had quietly left our rooms, hired a carriage, and were on our way hither. We posted all the way, and have travelled night and day, for I had a sort of presentiment that something very dreadful would happen ; but the terrible idea of his joining Garibaldi and exposing his precious life never occurred to me." Here poor Beatrice burst into tears, and began wringing her hands.

"Oh, Ada!" she sobbed, "if I knew where he is, I would go to him. I would implore him on my knees not to risk a life which he has no right to endanger, since he vowed to devote it to me. You, Ada, you have nothing to keep you here. Let us go together to Garibaldi's head-quarters, wherever they may be ; at least, I shall expose

and explain all before he goes to battle ; and if he is killed, I will seek out his remains like another Edith, and die on his breast."

At this moment Bessie came rushing in, pale as death, "Oh, Miss Ada ! Miss Ada !" she cried. "The Woman in Grey ! The Woman in Grey !"

"What of the Woman in Grey, Bessie?" I asked.

"Oh, Miss Ada, she's flitted upstairs into Squire Fenwick's room, and she's e'en now sitting by his bedside."

"And where is Harry Blake?" I asked. "Where is Doctor B——?"

"They're in the little dressing-room, Miss Ada, and by this time they'll ha' seen her, that is if she's visible to them as she was to me ; but it isn't given to a' mortals to see wha's na canny. I was born on the Sabbath, and, therefore, I can see mony things ither e'en canna see."

Dr. B—— came down at this moment, and said, “Would you like to speak to the nurse, Miss Moore? She is now in Mr. Fenwick’s room.”

“Doctor, doctor!” cried Bessie, “ha’ ye seen the Woman in Grey?”

“The Woman in Grey, Bessie? To be sure I have. The nurse is a woman in grey.”

“Wi’ a lang robe and mantle and a hood, a’ o’ hodden grey?”

“Exactly.”

“There, Bessie,” I said, “now you see how unfounded and absurd your fears are. I will go with you, doctor,” I said, “to speak to the nurse, and tell her where she will find everything she may require during the night. You are quite certain she can be trusted?”

“If I were not, I would not have engaged her,” said Dr. B——. “She is no common nurse. She is a person of education, and a

lady by birth and breeding, but she has met with dreadful reverses. However, I am certain that you will feel entire confidence in her when you have seen her and spoken to her. Let me accompany you to Mr. Fenwick's room."

Lady Beatrice begged leave to go with us, and we repaired to what had been her apartment. A woman in grey was standing by the bedside, bathing the patient's hot head with eau-de-Cologne and water. Harry Blake was holding a candle for her the while. The light fell full on the pale but perfect features and braided jet-black hair of a woman who appeared to be about thirty-six years of age. She was singularly beautiful, and her large dark eyes were full of tears of pity as she marked the ravages suffering had made in the invalid's frame, and heard his moans of pain and sorrow.

Her hood was thrown back, and her beau-

tiful small Grecian head was adorned with a profusion of jet-black tresses. Her form was very graceful, and her hands were of faultless beauty. Her voice was very low and gentle, and all she did was done so tenderly and so gracefully, and the expression of face was so endearing, that I felt no fear or scruple about trusting Mr. Fenwick to her care during the night.

Harry Blake seemed charmed with her, and she spoke to him more with the gentle familiarity of a friend than with the formality of a stranger or the respect of a hireling. She was certainly a very remarkable woman. She would have been so from her singular beauty, grace, and dignified fascination of manner, in any position in life; but, in the capacity of a hired English nurse in a foreign land, she filled me with a deep interest and a lively curiosity.

I told her where she would find every-

thing she was likely to require during the night, and we conversed a little together on Mr. Fenwick's case, and on different systems of nursing. Everything she said denoted intelligence of a high order, a desire to benefit her patient and to do her duty by him, and a gentle deference for my opinion.

We took our leave at a hint from Dr. B——, and left the nurse alone with her patient.

“What a singularly elegant and interesting woman!” said Lady Beatrice when we were all in the drawing-room. “She is certainly a lady, and a woman of education.”

“She has seen better days,” said Dr. B——, “and her history is a very affecting one. She has told it me in confidence, and therefore I am not at liberty to say more than that you ladies may converse with her freely without in any way derogating from your dignity.”

“ I can’t think who or what she can have been,” said Harry Blake, “ but there is something about her which acts like a spell upon me. She is only here in the capacity of a kind nurse, and yet I felt, directly I saw her, as if I would go to the end of the world to serve her; and something in her eyes, her voice, and her melancholy smile, seemed to go straight to my heart !”

Why did I not quite like to hear Harry Blake express himself thus warmly about this beautiful and mysterious stranger? Why did it always cost me a jealous pang and many a secret tear if he seemed to think very highly of the beauty or merits of any woman?

Alas! what was he to me?—what was I to him?

The next day, Mr. Fenwick was certainly better; and a very great difficulty arose.

Lady Beatrice, to whom I had shown

Alphonse de Monleon's last letter, was in a fever of anxiety to be off to the camp, to endeavour, if possible, to prevent her lover's taking any part in the engagement which every one said must shortly take place between the Austrians and the Italians under Garibaldi.

What was to be done? She could not go alone. I was no chaperon for a girl more than two years older than myself; nor would it be at all proper for two young single ladies to be flitting about headquarters and battle-fields.

Harry Blake could not leave his benefactor, and Beatrice was in a state of excitement which seemed to threaten her reason or her life.

Fortunately, Dr. B—— knew a noble Mentonese lady, Madame de Biondini, whose husband was an Italian, and their eldest son was gone to join Garibaldi.

She was very anxious, as he had left home privately, and not on the best possible terms with his parents, to embrace him before he went to battle, and she undertook to chaperon Lady Beatrice in her visit to Garibaldi's head-quarters.

Proudfoot went with them, and I would have been of the party but that I thought the duties of hospitality compelled me to remain where I was while Mr. Fenwick lay too ill to be moved from the house of which *I* was the nominal mistress.

CHAPTER XX.

MR. FENWICK'S PROPOSAL.

A FEW days had now elapsed since Beatrice's departure.

Mr. Fenwick had continued to improve. He seemed to find great comfort and consolation in the careful, tender, and judicious nursing of Madame Grey (as she was called), and a very decided improvement had taken place in his symptoms.

I had taken his nurse's place by his bedside while she went to refresh and rest

herself by lying down for an hour or two in Bessie's room.

Harry Blake was gone out for a long walk.

Mr. Fenwick stretched out his hand to me, and said—

“Ada, my dear girl, are we quite alone?”

“Quite,” I replied, trembling and blushing, for I feared he was going to speak to me of Harry Blake.

“Ada,” he said, “since I have been confined to this bed I have thought a great deal about you and Harry Blake. You are an orphan now, my poor girl,—an orphan in the fullest sense of that dreadful word; and what is worse, Ada, you are a penniless orphan.”

I wept at the thoughts the word ‘orphan’ conjured up, but I could not reply save by my tears and sobs.

“Harry Blake,” continued Mr. Fenwick, “loves you, Ada, with all his heart and soul. He has loved you all his life. He has never loved any other. I am much mistaken if you are not attached to Harry Blake.”

“Oh, Mr. Fenwick,” I said, “do you forget who his parents were and who were mine?”

“No, I do not forget that by an accident of birth Harry Blake, in the eyes of a cold world, is no mate for the daughter of a Moore of Moordell; but, for all that, Harry is one of the ‘noblest works of God,’ for he is the soul of honour and honesty. What if I were to adopt him as my son?—to give him my name, and to bind myself to provide for him handsomely while I live, and to make him my heir when I die?”

“No, no, no!” I said. “No! it cannot be, Mr. Fenwick! I admire Harry—I like

him,—nay, I will not say that I do not love him ; but—”

“ But pride—and the most stupid pride of all, pride of birth—steps in ; and, under its hateful influence, you are willing to sacrifice Harry and yourself. Silly girl ! you know not what a noble heart you doom to desolation. Why, when I told Harry I thought of making him my heir, he replied, ‘ Oh, Sir ! Oh, generous benefactor, I, owing to my beloved friend the late Vicar of Moordell, have received an education, by which I can gain far more than I require ; but Ada !—the only child of your dear friends—Ada is left a destitute, penniless orphan. Ada, so tenderly reared, so highly born, so beautiful, what can Ada do in this cold, cold world, where, for the young and lonely of her sex, there’s nothing but the drudgery of a governessship, or that worse still, because less defined, the miseries of a

fine lady's companion? Make Ada Moore your heiress, and, by so doing, you would do me the greatest favour, and confer on me the greatest happiness my heart can ever know!' And yet, you blind, prejudiced, proud, and heartless girl, a man who would act thus is not noble enough to be wedded to a Moore of Moordell! Go!" he cried, working himself up into one of those passions which used to be habitual with him, "I hate to have fools about me, and of all fools, prejudiced fools are the worst. Go!"

"But, dear Mr. Fenwick," I said, "how do you know, even if I loved Mr. Blake and were willing to marry him, that he loves me, and would wish me to become his wife?"

"Ada Moore!" said Mr. Fenwick sternly, "if I hate a fool much, I hate a hypocrite more. Do you mean to tell me that you do not know that Harry loves you as it is the

lot of few women to be loved—as few have even deserved to be loved? None that I have ever known, saving indeed your saint-like mother. Do you not know that, from his boyhood, you have been the idol of his fancy, the beloved of his heart; that he has never given a thought to any other woman; and that if he has not dared to try to win your love, it has only been because he thinks you so superior to himself by birth and station, that it would be presumption in him even to breathe his love to any but his own heart? He has never owned it to me, but, blind as I am, I am no fool, and I soon discovered that he had made an idol of clay,—very fine, delicately-tinted, transparent porcelain if you will, but clay all the same. Ah, I think I hear my nurse's step. Now there's a woman who, in my opinion, ranks next to your angel mother for every quality that adorns her sex. I cannot see

her features, but I fancy she must be very beautiful ; and she is, certainly, a most gentle, graceful, gifted lady. I have nothing more to say to you, thankless, soulless girl ! And yet I will tell you one thing—nay, two things, which, if you had any gratitude in your nature, would surely awaken it. When your dear father was at Oxford he went on a boating party with some old Dons and young Harry ; the boat was upset by a collision with a barge ; all were in the water, and your father alone could not swim. Harry saved his life at the imminent risk of his own. The affair was kept a secret from your mother and you, but the papers were full of Harry's heroism, and the Humane Society awarded him a medal. Added to this, for months after your father's death, Harry lived on next to nothing, in order to send your mother all his earnings to pay your father's debts."

Madame Grey entered at this moment, and I took my leave. Mr. Fenwick was still very angry with me, and scarcely responded when I wished him good night:

CHAPTER XXI.

A CLOUDED PROSPECT.

ALONE in my own room, I began seriously to examine my own heart, and to reflect on my own position—my own prospects. What was I to do? If Lady Beatrice married Alphonse de Monleon, I had little doubt she would offer me a home with her. What then? I should only be a dependant—a creature living on another's bounty—a sort of hired companion. Was not such a position almost as repugnant to the feelings of a Moore of Moordell as the marrying a man

who was a perfect gentleman in everything save the accident of birth? If, on the other hand, Alphonse de Monleon fell on the field of battle, I felt certain Beatrice would not survive him, probably not many hours, and then I should not have a friend in the world to whom I could turn. Mr. Fenwick would resent my refusal of his proposal that I should accept Harry Blake when he had named him his heir.

I was walking up and down my own room as I pondered on these things, and thought, with a vague feeling of terror, what would become of me, when, raising my eyes to a sketch of my beloved mother, which Alphonse de Monleon had taken, and of which the likeness was perfect, I suddenly exclaimed,

“Oh, Mother! dear angel Mother! is it possible that I can be already taking thought for the future, and debating the

accepting or rejecting of a proposal, when you are lying in your grave, shut out for ever from my yearning love? And yet, Mother dearest, while I am doomed to marry him, I must ponder on that future which spreads like a darkened plain before me. Oh that I could still fly, as of yore, to your warm and sympathizing bosom, and ask counsel and guidance of your wisdom and your love! Mother, would you have welcomed Harry Blake as your Ada's husband?"

Of course it was the result of my excited fancy, and of the earnest gaze I fixed on my mother's angel face; but really the eyes seemed to melt, and the lips to dimple into a smile.

"Oh, Mother," I cried, highly excited, "I see that you smile on this proposal of Mr. Fenwick's. You always liked and admired Harry. Well, then, when this

season of deep grief and deeper mourning has passed away, I will see whether I can repay Harry's deep love; and if I can—I will be his wife.”

CHAPTER XXII.

SUNSHINE.

THE next day brought letters from Lady Beatrice and from Mr. Tait, a solicitor at Warkworth.

I opened Beatrice's first. A battle had been fought. Alphonse had performed prodigies of valour. His was the heroism of despair. He had been wounded, but not very severely. Madame de Biondini's son had been less fortunate. He had not distinguished himself so much as Alphonse, and had been much more severely wounded.

Both Alphonse and M. de Biondini were in the hospital at C——, and Beatrice and Madame de Biondini were allowed to visit, nurse, and tend the wounded warriors.

Lady Beatrice was happy beyond description. All was explained, all was made up between her and Alphonse; and as soon as he was quite recovered they were to be united.

“You, dearest Ada,” she said in conclusion, “shall be my only bridesmaid, for you are my only true friend; and I hope you will take up your abode with us, for I look upon you as a sister.”

Mr. Tait’s letter—which I had laid aside, little dreaming of its contents—contained intelligence even more startling than Beatrice’s. The Anglo-Indian, Sir Selim Moore, was dead.

He and the Begum, his mother, had both caught the small-pox, no one knew of whom;

but it was supposed that Sir Selim, who, idle and profligate, was very fond of intruding into a cottage on the estate, where a very beautiful girl called Katie Bell lived, had caught the dreadful disease there, for Katie's little sister had died of it since his last unwelcome visit. Of course the Begum caught it from her son, but she was likely to recover.

Sir Selim was dead, and Mr. Tait, who had been employed by him as a solicitor, wrote to apprise me of the event, since, as Sir Selim had died unmarried, I was at last what I had always been considered in my childhood—the heiress of Moordell.

It would be impossible for me to analyse or describe the emotions with which this sudden change in my fortunes filled my brain and my heart. The leading one was a feeling of unutterable agony and regret, that my beloved mother had not lived to see

her only child raised to fortune and position, and to both with me. My beloved father too,—he who had always loved to look upon me as one day to be the lady of Moordell Hall!

“‘Oh, what avails half earth’s success,
No early friend shall see or share?’

I said to myself, as my tears fell like rain, and I sobbed out the words, ‘Father! mother! oh that you had been spared, so that we might all have lived together in the dear old Hall, to which my father was so deeply and devotedly attached!’”

From these thoughts my mind wandered to Harry Blake,—Harry, who had saved my dear father’s life at the risk of his own,—Harry, who had deprived himself of necessities, in order to enable my beloved mother to pay my poor dear father’s debts.

Never had my father told my mother or me of the accident which had so nearly cost

him his life. Never had my mother spoken to me of my father's debts, or of Harry's having enabled her to pay them. I could understand my father's not liking to present Harry to my mind as a hero to whom I owed a parent's life; and, knowing Harry's great delicacy, I felt sure he had made my mother promise not to mention the pecuniary service he had rendered her.

But these proofs of his devotion to those dear ones, always so beloved by me in life, and now more than loved—idolized, adored, and passionately regretted with that unutterable and yearning tenderness we feel for our darlings gone for ever,—these proofs of his goodness and devotion to them made me resolve, since his happiness depended on me, to show him all the gratitude in my power; and, without telling him at first that the hand and heart he coveted were those of the Lady of Moordell Hall, frankly to tell

Mr. Fenwick that I accepted him as my affianced, and was willing to become his wife when my season of deep mourning was over.

In order to do this, I took an opportunity of sending Harry out on a trifling commission, while Madame Grey was lying down to rest herself.

Mr. Fenwick was very cross at first; but when I told him I had thought over what he had said, and had decided on accepting Harry Blake, and on marrying him when my deep mourning was over, he called me a good, sensible girl; and, Harry coming in at this moment, Mr. Fenwick called us both to his bed-side, joined our hands, and blessed us.

Of Harry's gratitude, surprise, and joy, no words can convey any idea; and yet he knew not I was the heiress of Moordell.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. FENWICK'S HISTORY.

March 30th.—Madame Grey is certainly the best nurse and the sweetest woman in the world. Mr. Fenwick and Harry are positively fond of her.

She has a very sweet, plaintive voice, and sings some old Scotch and Irish ditties in a manner to force the tears from your very heart.

She was singing ‘Donald’ to-day, when suddenly Mr. Fenwick burst into tears, and exclaimed—

“Stop, Madame Grey,—stop, I implore you ! I cannot bear it. You do not know my history. You do not know that I had a wife once, a girl—a child, beautiful, good, gifted—who used to sing that song. Your voice and manner of singing it remind me of her. Wretch that I was ! I loved her to distraction, but I was tormented by the thought that the disparity in our years prevented her loving me as she might have loved a younger man ; and yet, at times, she seemed very fond of me ; but at others, it might be my fancy (Heaven only knows), I thought she seemed to feel herself a victim and a martyr.—

“And if she did, who can wonder at it ? Fool that I was ! I yearned for her love, and I tried to frighten her into loving me ! The same with my child—my boy, my heir. I was so harsh, passionate, and tyrannical, I became the terror of both.

“My poor young wife bore all my cruelty and exacting tyranny as long as she only was concerned, for she had a high sense of duty ; but I was cruel to my child. I was full of false theories and harsh discipline.

“One day I punished him—infant that he was—so severely that he went into convulsions, in which he very nearly died. I saw my fault—my crime, rather—but I was too proud to own it.

“I beheld terror and even horror in my poor Eva's eyes.

“I went out without expressing one regret, but, wrong-headed and cruel as I was, saying that the next time I punished the boy it should be much more severely.

“What fiend urged me to say this I know not, for in my heart I loathed myself for the injury I had done my idolized boy, and the agony I had caused the wife I secretly worshipped.

“I went out in rage and defiance. When I returned in the evening my wife and child were gone !

“I never beheld them more. I believe they were shipwrecked and perished on their way to America, and my life has been one long regret—one long remorse !”

CHAPTER XXIV.

MADAME GREY'S HISTORY.

MADAME GREY must have a very tender heart, for she sobbed while poor Mr. Fenwick told his sad, sad tale.

“Now you have told me your secret history,” she said, gently taking the sufferer’s hand, “I will tell you mine. You will see there are lives as blighted, hearts as desolate, regrets as bitter, and remorse as keen as even yours. But first, as my tale is rather an exciting one, tell me how you feel. You know this is about the time.

that Dr. B—— expected that the optic nerve would regain its power, and that you would be able at last to see the faces of your devoted friends. When Dr. B—— comes we are to let some light into the room, and to try whether you cannot distinguish our features.”

We had been sitting almost in the dark ; in fact, by Dr. B——’s order, the room was always darkened. At the best, nothing stronger than twilight was admitted there.

“I am calm now, dear Madame Grey,” said Mr. Fenwick, “and it would interest me much to hear something of the antecedents and sorrows of one of the sweetest ladies I have ever known.”

“Well, then,” said Madame Grey, “I will tell you my story. My mother was English, my father Italian. At the age of twelve a noble-hearted, wealthy, learned English gentleman, who had lodged in my

parents' house, and, in a time of great distress, had nobly saved them from ruin and despair. He adopted me, and placed me in a first-rate English school, and I was educated according to his directions. When I was sixteen he married me. He was a noble-looking, handsome man, some twenty years my senior. I was a romantic, silly, petulant girl; and though in my heart I loved him, I often appeared to think myself a victim, a martyr; and of course this roused his passionate, irritable temper. Rebels make tyrants. I was a rebel—a quiet, crafty little rebel, but still a rebel. I was angry with him for ruling over me, and I revenged myself by making him believe that I could not love him. He became a tyrant. We had one noble, beautiful child. He, my husband, had strange theories about the training of infants from a very early age. I opposed them violently. By gentleness I

might have prevailed, but opposition maddened him. He was one day very harsh to the child; that harshness caused the darling a fit. I fled with our mutual treasure, but I fled no farther than a lodging in a street near at hand, where my former maid, summoned by me, joined me. She was Betty Blake's daughter, but she had left my service to get married, and she was about to emigrate with her husband. As she was devotedly attached to me, she agreed to go privately at night to Moordell, to tell her mother the sad truth, and to make her swear to keep the secret and bring up Harry as her son. Her sister also took the oath of secrecy. To every one else Harry seemed to be Betty Blake's grandson. I then wrote to my uncle at Florence. I did not know that he was there, but I took my chance of my letter finding him. I told my tale with all the passion then boiling over in my breast. My

uncle had returned from California a very rich man, a childless widower. He came to me. He fired up when I told him my tale, but he advised me, if possible, not to lose sight of my child. He went down to the country; and finding an old Dower House to let furnished, he hired it for me. He supplied me with the means of living there in comfort and seclusion. He said, 'Of course when your son is grown up you will declare who he is.' I was thus able to see him and watch over him occasionally; but I dared not make myself known to him or to any one, for fear my husband, who lived in the neighbourhood, and was one of the great men of the county, should see me and compel me to return to him. How cunning we are, at one time of our lives, in carrying out schemes of which we bitterly repent in after life—schemes which often ensure the misery of the rest of our days! I flitted

about like a ghost, to steal a glance at my dear boy, and to avoid meeting his father. During a long and severe illness—a recent illness—a change came over my spirit and my heart. My sins came before me and my conscience awoke, and by its searching light I saw that I had erred. Under the influence of anger and fear I had left him whom I had sworn never to forsake till death us should part. I had robbed my husband of his child, my child of his father, and myself of both. I prayed God to pardon me as freely as I pardoned him who, from mistaken motives, *had* been very harsh to me; and”—(Dr. Bennett had glided in unperceived, while we listened spell-bound to the confession of this lonely woman; suddenly he drew up the dark blinds and pulled the curtains aside). “Yes,” she continued, “he had been very harsh to me, and harsher still to our only boy; but we both forgive him. Husband!” she

cried, addressing Mr. Fenwick, who in his excitement had risen in his bed, and, as the light fell on her face and sight returned to his eyes, he had stretched out his arms, and while the tears streamed down his cheeks, had exclaimed, "'Tis she ! 'tis Eva ! come to my heart."

" Husband !" she exclaimed, " take back your wife forgiven and forgiving. Harry, our only son, ask your father's blessing. You are no grandson of Betty Blake ; you are our only child, placed with old Betty by me to save you from him whose severity I then dreaded."

" Come to my heart, my wife ! come to my heart, my son !" cried Mr. Fenwick, throwing his arms round that lovely woman and that noble youth. " Eva, if you are no longer the radiant Hebe you were when I saw you last, there is still in your dear face and form enough of your former self for me

to recognise in you the beloved wife of my bosom. You have not lost that beauty for which you were so remarkable, my Eva. It is still your portion, but refined, purified, exalted by thought, suffering, and repentance. And you, Harry—I now understand why my heart warmed towards you from the first; why I loved you as a father, although I had then no idea that I had a father's share in you."

CHAPTER XXV.

REUNION.

How husband, wife, and son wept and embraced each other ! But Dr. B——, feeling that there was something almost sacred in the joy ineffable of such a reunion, led Beatrice and myself out of the room ; and the long-parted, now so happily restored to each other, continued long together undisturbed, talking over all the details of that long estrangement which had thrown so great a gloom over three-and-twenty years that might have been so happy.

When I was alone with Dr. B—— he told me that he had known all along who Madame Grey was; that he had attended her while she was suffering from a relapse: for before coming to Mentone she had been long and dangerously ill. It was during that illness that she first began to doubt whether she had not done wrong to leave her husband, and to rob him of his child, and whether it had not been unjust to that child, the heir of Fenwick of Fenwick, to have had him reared in poverty, and doomed him to pass through infancy, boyhood, and youth as the humble Betty Blake's grandson.

At different periods of our life we see things from such a different point of view. When Harry was a helpless infant, whose life had been very nearly sacrificed to the mistaken severity of his father, it seemed to her that it was her duty as a mother to pro-

tect her helpless infant, and to escape with him at all risks and at every sacrifice.

Mrs. Fenwick had an uncle at Florence, a wealthy merchant, to whom she confided her secret, and who supplied her with funds to take the old Moordell Dower House, and to live there; and it was from him she obtained the money which old Betty Blake forwarded to my dear father for Harry's expenses at Oxford.

For more than twenty years Mrs. Fenwick thought she was justified in all she had done, and that Harry, trained in the school of adversity, would grow up free from those faults of temper and from that tyranny, arrogance, and cruelty, which had made Mr. Fenwick a curse to himself and to all around him.

The first doubt that stole into her mind with regard to the result of her conduct was when she first discovered that Harry was

unhappy, and, with a woman's quickness, guessed that hopeless love was the cause of his evident despair.

It was only, however, on a sick bed that her conscience began to smite her, and that she resolved, now her husband was ailing, old, and blind, and Harry was strong, healthy, and able to take care of himself, to unravel the web of mystery which she had so carefully woven round her son and herself, to follow them to Mentone, and there to watch her opportunity of revealing herself to her husband and her son, and of course at the same time of restoring that son to his father.

Mr. Fenwick's illness presented the opportunity she desired, and Dr. B—— willingly agreed to assist her after he had heard her singular history.

The lady and child who had perished in the shipwreck of the "Ocean Queen" were

somewhat similar in appearance and age to Mrs. Fenwick and her Harry; and when once the detective and Mr. Fenwick had decided that those unfortunates were Mrs. Fenwick and her child, all pursuit was abandoned, and, had not the wife and mother raised the veil herself, it is probable it would never have been lifted.

* * * * *

Mr. Fenwick recovered his health and his sight, and when, as he said, "Mentone became too hot to hold him," or indeed any of us, we resolved to return to England.

This was about the end of May. By this time Harry knew that I was the heiress of Moordell Hall. I do not think it added anything to his happiness; but Mr. Fenwick was much delighted, and said that this would be the third time that a son of a Fenwick of Fenwick had married a daughter of a Moore of Moordell.

Before we left Mentone, Lady Beatrice and Madame de Biondini had returned, bringing with them the two wounded heroes, now convalescent.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MOORDELL HALL.

April 14th.—A year and ten days have elapsed since my angel mother was taken from me, and I have consented to be married to Harry on this day month.

Lady Beatrice and Alphonse de Monleon were united soon after our arrival in England. The wedding took place at the town mansion of the Duke and Duchess of Northlands. The Duke gave the bride away. The Duchess knew that Lady Beatrice's happiness was at stake, and, though a duchess,

she believed in true love, and did not sneer at a love match. They are to be present at our wedding.

The old Begum, Lady Moore, still lives, and I have offered to let her inhabit the Indian apartments built for her by my uncle. This she is glad to do for a time, but she wishes to return to her own country; and, as all is quiet there now, she will probably do so in the autumn.

I have become most deeply and tenderly attached to Harry, and his father and mother are the happiest and most loving couple in the country.

The dear old Count, with "Mignon" in his bosom; Signor Bernardini, crowned with laurels, a star on his breast, and glorying in Italy, now free and united; and poor Colonel Ridley, are staying with me at Moordell Hall. Bessie, who is in high glee; Proudfoot, who is under a cloud, for she has been

jilted by the courier ; and old Betty, in brand-new clothes, looking proudly on her daughter, are among the guests in the servants' hall. Mr. Lefevre is to perform the marriage ceremony.

Oh, my dear parents, you are cognizant of what passes on earth ! You will smile approval on your Ada's choice !

My wedding day ! I woke betimes this morning. The spring sun was streaming in on my bridal attire, laid out on a sofa in my room,—the orange wreath, the bridal veil, the white satin dress, the costly pearls—dear Harry's gift. I must mention here that I restored to the dear old Count the diamond ring and brooch, of which, thank heaven ! I had never had any occasion to make any use. His eyes glistened as he saw them again, and he said—

“De lady of Moordell Hall and Fenwick Park have no need of dem, so I take dem

back, wid all my heart, and will wear dem at de wedding of *ma chérie*."

Before any one was stirring, I rose, dressed myself hastily, and letting myself out at the glass door of the breakfast-room, I hurried to my dear parents' grave. I had taken with me some sprays of orange blossom, from a huge and fragrant bouquet on my table, and I laid them on the tomb of those best beloved ones. While I was there the dear old Count and Signor Bernardini, accompanied by Harry, arrived, all with wreaths of *immortelles*, to place on that tomb.

We all knelt, and wept and prayed together there, and soon the bells began to ring, and the school children to shout for joy, and to strew the path from the Hall to the church with flowers.

We parted, and I hurried back to my room.

* * * * *

The ceremony is over. I was very nervous and hysterical. I fear I must have seemed very silly. Harry was all quiet joy and silent rapture.

The guests are assembled in the old banqueting hall, and high above their voices I hear "Mignon" screeching out, "*Vive le Roi!*" The Count, turning to Harry, said—

"Mignon means dat for you, Harry, who have prove yourself de king of hearts,—at least of one heart, de best and truest in de world."

I have just come home from the church, and for the last time have signed the name of ADA MOORE.

And thus ends her story.

THE END.



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